

Noted writer mourned in Jerusalem

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — Arab leaders, including Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat and Lebanese President Elias Hrawi, have cabled condolences to the family of Ismail Mousa Hussein, a noted Palestinian writer and teacher who died this week in Jerusalem, family members said Friday. Hussein died Tuesday at his home in Arab Jerusalem. He was 86. He was the author of 22 books and numerous academic essays during a teaching career that spanned more than four decades. He taught at Jerusalem's Arabic College, the American University of Beirut and the American University of Cairo. In 1982, he founded the women's art college, which is part of the Jerusalem University, and was its president until his death. His fellow Palestinian writers in 1986 gave him the honorary title of "Dean of Palestinian Literature." An expert in Semitic languages, Hussein was a leading figure in the Arabic linguistic academies in Egypt and Iraq. Hussein's eldest son, Hatem Hussein, a political science lecturer at Shaw University in Raleigh, North Carolina, said hundreds of letters and cables of condolences have been received.

Jordan Times

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Christian leaders call for dialogue

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — The leaders of the major Christian churches in Jerusalem issued a Christmas appeal Friday for peace negotiations to end the Gulf crisis and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. "Our region is living one of its most crucial crisis in its modern history, dangerously poised on the brink of war," the church leaders said in a statement. They called on "peace-loving people" to try to influence world leaders "so that they may resolve the conflict in the Gulf without bloodshed and its inevitable loss of human lives." The church leaders decried the conditions of Palestinians in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. "The prospects of constructive dialogue and peace in the holy land are receding," the churchmen's statement said. "Despair is the pervasive mood." They called for "the path of negotiation rather than violence." The church leaders said that because of the continuing problems in the occupied territories, they would restrict Christmas festivities to religious ceremonies "without any manifestation of jubilation." They said holiday prayers would be devoted "to peace of the land and the world."

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Iraq rejects deadline but welcomes dialogue

BONN (Agencies) — Iraq will not withdraw from Kuwait before Jan. 15, the U.N. deadline after which member states may use force to oust it, President Saddam Hussein said in an interview with German television broadcast Friday. Asked if his country would withdraw by Jan. 15 from Kuwait, Saddam replied: "No." He added: "In a war there will be many losses, not just in human life, also for those who now say yes to war. Allah is on our side. That is why we will beat the aggressor."

He accused U.S. President George Bush of planning a war against Iraq but said Bush would not be able to see it through "because he is a bad leader." Earlier on Friday, U.S. Secretary of State James Baker said in Washington Iraqi behaviour gave no grounds for optimism that war could be averted. He told reporters after meeting British Prime Minister John Major: "So far at least, the behaviour of the government of Iraq... would not make one optimistic that we could succeed in our very strong efforts to achieve a political peaceful resolution."

Baker said he had still not heard from Baghdad about the date of his proposed visit to the Iraqi capital for talks with President Saddam. The parties have been squabbling for more than two weeks about the date of the visit. It was supposed to be a last effort to avert war before a United Nations resolution authorising the use of force against Iraq takes effect Jan. 15. Baker said the resolution passed by the Security Council on Nov. 29 "makes credible the possibility of the use of force." But he declined to comment on whether war was becoming more likely.

National Security Advisor Brent Scowcroft said President Bush intended to force Iraq to withdraw even if it means war. "One of the important points we're trying to get across to (Iraq) is that we haven't blinked so far, we're not blinking now and we will not blink," Scowcroft said Friday in an interview with wire service reporters. Scowcroft said the Jan. 15 U.N. deadline was not a date for starting a war, but he added, "if necessary, we will carry out the mandate of the Security Council."



Crown Prince: Chances for peace in Gulf appear slim

AMMAN (J.T.) — Chances for a peaceful resolution of the Gulf crisis appear slim, given the state of Arab efforts, the bickering over direct American-Iraqi contacts and military preparations in the Gulf, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan said Friday.

The Crown Prince, in an interview with British Television, was asked how he judged the chance of resolving the four-and-a-half-month-old crisis peacefully.

There is no date for a meeting yet between the Americans and the Iraqis and we seem to be moving inexorably towards the (Jan.) 15th, and towards war."

Jordan extends cautious welcome to U.N. resolution

Egypt, Syria enthusiastic, PLO sceptical over U.N. call; Israel assails Washington

By Ghadeer Taber
Jordan Times Staff Reporter
with agency dispatches

AMMAN — Jordanian officials Friday reacted cautiously to a U.N. Security Council resolution criticising Israeli practices in the occupied territories, saying that while the resolution was a step in the right direction it fell short of expectations of a call for an international peace conference.

Despite the resolution's shortcomings, Izzeddin said, there are "positive elements" in the resolution. It has "specifically mentioned Jerusalem as part of the occupied territories... and (called for) a meeting of the signatories to the Fourth Geneva Convention which could enhance the mechanism to protect Palestinians."

Jordan's losses seen at \$8.3 b

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan stands to lose \$8.3 billion in the year from Aug. 2 1990 to Aug. 2 1991, as a result of the Gulf crisis, a U.N. agency said Friday.

Shevardnadze to stay on Gorbachev's team

MOSCOW (AP) — President Mikhail Gorbachev met with Eduard Shevardnadze Friday, a day after the foreign minister's stunning resignation, and a presidential aide indicated Shevardnadze might retain a government post.

The two Soviet leaders discussed the Gulf crisis and arms control treaties, several government spokesmen said. When pressed, presidential spokesman Vitaly Ignatenko indicated Shevardnadze might retain a government post.

His resignation prompted worldwide concern over the future of reform in the Soviet Union. His resignation also dominated discussion in parliament Friday morning, and a Ukrainian lawmaker later said a right-wing "coup" was going on under the parliament's nose.

Hopes kindled for shift in Soviet policy, but caution is the keyword

By Lami K. Andoni
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The resignation of Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze is raising hope among ordinary Jordanian citizens that Moscow would shift to a more favourable position on the Gulf crisis, but officials and analysts caution against expectations that the change will regain for Arab causes past strong Soviet support.

Although analysts in the region agreed that the shift in the Soviet foreign policy towards the Middle East was a result of the internal shake up in the Soviet Union and the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe, Shevardnadze is blamed for pursuing policies which practically have served U.S. interests.

NEWS ANALYSIS

While highly esteemed and hailed in the West, Shevardnadze is criticised by many analysts and politicians in the region for steering the Soviet foreign policy towards appeasing the United States at the expense of the Third World in general and the Arab World in particular.

Prior to the eruption of the Gulf crisis in August, the changes in Soviet policy in the Middle East were characterised by a decline in Moscow's enthusiasm for the idea of convening an international peace conference to solve the Palestinian problem, the initiation and subsequent elevation of diplomatic contacts with Israel and, most significantly, the encouragement of mass immigration of Soviet Jews to Israel.

Israel says it caught Druze 'spies'

TEL AVIV (R) — Israel has arrested at least three Druze from the Israeli-annexed Golan Heights on suspicion of spying for Syria, police said Friday. Israeli troops shot dead one Druze and arrested a second from the village of Majdal Shamas in the Golan Heights on Nov. 22. They had attempted to cross into Syria to pass intelligence information to the Syrian army, police said. The suspect who was captured admitted spying for Syria and had police told at least two other alleged spies from Majdal Shamas, they added.

Iraqis rehearse evacuation; Cheney says war likely

Combined agency dispatches

AIR RAID SIRENS blared across Baghdad, and more than one million Iraqis fled their homes Friday in a major evacuation drill in response to fears that U.S.-organised forces could attack Iraqi sites.

U.S. Defence Secretary Dick Cheney told troops Friday in Saudi Arabia that it is increasingly likely war will be needed to oust Iraq from Kuwait, and that "absolute, total victory" is the only option if war breaks out.

Iranian journalists attend GCC summit

DOHA (R) — Qatar has invited Iranian journalists to attend a summit of the six-member Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) for the first time since its creation in 1981, an Iranian editor said Friday.

Iraq ready for honourable concessions, Algeria tells Italy

De Michelis: EC may take initiative

ROME (Agencies) — Iraq is willing to compromise to avert war in the Gulf, but will not accept a solution that sullies its honour, Algeria's foreign minister said Friday.

"Iraq certainly seeks a peaceful solution and is willing to pay the price for it — but not any price and it will not accept any settlement that sullies its honour," Algerian Foreign Minister Sid Ahmad Ghozali told a news conference.

The officials said Benjeddid had not specifically mentioned an Iraqi withdrawal and had not gone into details of what kind of concessions or partial deal Baghdad might settle for to secure a peaceful solution.

Pakistanis held in Iranian official's killing

LAHORE (R) — Pakistani police investigating the killing of an Iranian official have arrested a leader of a militant Sunni group, the group said Friday. Qari Mohammad Khan, chief of the Anjuman Sipah-i-Sahaba in the Pakistani city Lahore, was detained Thursday night, the organisation's national leader Maulana Zia-ul-Rahman Farooqi told reporters. At least one gunman shot Ardesheer Sadegh Ganji, director-general of the Iranian cultural centre in Lahore, as he stepped from his car outside a hotel in the city on Wednesday. Police say they have arrested five Pakistanis in connection with the killing, including some members of the Sipah-i-Sahaba group whom they have not named. Several other people are being held for questioning.

Sheikh Sabah postpones Moscow trip

BAHRAIN (AP) — Kuwait's foreign minister in exile said he would postpone the resignation of Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze and hopes it will not change Moscow's stand on Iraq's occupation of Kuwait, the Kuwait News Agency reported Friday. The agency said Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmad Al Sabah made the comment Thursday in Doha where he will attend the annual summit conference of the Gulf Cooperation Council that opens Saturday. KUNA said Sheikh Sabah had planned to visit Moscow next week at the invitation of Shevardnadze, but that the trip was postponed Friday.

New Lebanese premier begins efforts for unity government

BEIRUT (R) — Newly appointed Prime Minister Omar Karami started talks Friday with Lebanon's political leaders on forming a national unity government charged with ending more than 15 years of civil war.

"This is a very critical period in the history of the country. Either an efficient and strong new government is formed or the country will be declining towards an unprecedented depression," the leftist newspaper Al Safir said.

Arab-brokered, internationally backed peace march in the country

Thousands of troops took over militia-run areas of Beirut earlier this month and united the divided capital for the first time since 1975.

The new cabinet is expected to disband by March

The new cabinet is expected to disband by March all of Lebanon's private armies and establish stronger links with Syria, which has about 40,000 troops in the country.

The hardline rightists Lebanese Forces (LF) militia, which was against Karami's nomination, dismissed an enlarged government as a "carnival" and inefficient.

The Progressive Socialist Party, led by Walid Jumblatt, said such a cabinet would be "untidy."

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Anti-war movement boosted in Europe

BONN (Agencies) — About 500 German university professors on Thursday urged the United States not to go to war with Iraq.

"We appeal to you urgently, jointly with the United Nations, to unwaveringly strive for a political solution in the Gulf instead of a military one," the professors said in a message to the U.S. embassy in Bonn.

The group maintained that "Saddam Hussein cannot afford to resist pressure" from current U.N. sanctions designed to peacefully force Iraq to leave Kuwait.

"But instead we are living in a world that is preparing for a multinational war which would kill tens of thousands of soldiers, including Americans, and also a large number of women and children," the professors said.

The group denounced Iraq's Aug. 2 invasion of Kuwait, but said "this crime cannot be responded to with a war which would be a crime whose proportions would be many times greater."

The appeal was signed by professors from universities across Germany.

About 3,000 people marched through central Madrid Thursday to demand a peaceful solution to the Gulf crisis and the withdrawal of foreign forces from the area.

The protesters, who answered a march call from the Communist-led United Left (IU) coalition, trade unions and pacifist groups, demanded the return of three Spanish warships sent to the Gulf to enforce sanctions against Iraq.

Foreign Minister Francisco Fernandez Ordonez said Wednesday that Spain would not send troops or more warships to the Gulf in the event of war after the expiry of a United Nations deadline of Jan. 15 for Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait.

In Strasbourg, over 40 members of the European Parliament called Thursday for peace marches in European cities on Jan. 12.

"This war is not our war. Armed action could only be an American decision and could only take place under American command," said the 43 MPs, from various countries and parties.

They said they were prepared to start a quest for peace in Washington and Baghdad and called on European countries to pull out of the Gulf any troops beyond those strictly necessary to enforce the U.N. trade embargo against Iraq.

Urging immediate talks on a global settlement to Middle East problems, they said they were ready to visit Iraq, the U.S., Israel and the United Nations after Jan. 13 to seek a peaceful end to the Gulf crisis.

In other Gulf developments: French Defence Minister Jean-Pierre Chevenement will spend Christmas with French troops in the Saudi desert, the ministry said Thursday.

France has 6,200 soldiers in the multinational force facing Iraq and President Francois Mitterrand has pledged they would fight if Baghdad failed to comply with U.N. resolutions to leave Kuwait.

— U.S. air force active-duty and reserve units will send more aircraft and people to the Gulf, the U.S. military command said.

The statement said three more active-duty air force fighter units and 15 air force reserve and air national guard tanker units had begun preparations to deploy additional support.

Dramatic rise in Soviet emigre wave

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — The Israeli government told airport officials Friday to prepare all available planes for the immediate transport of Soviet Jews from Eastern Europe as immigrants flooded in at a rate of about 3,000 a day.

"We have been urged by the minister of transport to make every possible aircraft available for this over the weekend and have obtained special permission to fly on the Sabbath (Saturday)," said Nachman Kleinman, spokesman for the El Al airline.

Immigration and airport workers said Friday that the rate of immigration had more than doubled in the past 24 hours.

More than 2,000 immigrants in 10 planes arrived between noon Thursday and early Friday morning while 15 other planes were expected Friday and Saturday bringing in 6,000 immigrants.

The shock resignation Thursday of Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze may lead to a further increase in the number of Jews going to Israel, fearing President Mikhail Gorbachev's liberal emigration policies may be reversed immigrants said.

Gurevich Gertsovich, 43, a librarian from Minsk, arrived with 15 relatives on Friday morning.

"We feel there is a danger that the authorities may close the doors to immigration. We have already learned that the longer you wait the worse it gets. Nothing ever good comes out of waiting so we left," she said.

The additional planes will fly to Bucharest, Budapest and Warsaw, the transit points for Soviet Jews in Eastern Europe.

Religious leaders approved flights normally banned on the Jewish law which makes saving human lives a priority over all other religious obligations.

Israel and the Soviet Union, which do not have full diplomatic relations, are negotiating direct flights.

More than 180,000 Soviet immigrants have come to Israel since January and at least one million are expected by 1995.

Jews who have emigration permits are leaving by car, train, ships and airplanes to transit stations in Hungary, Romania

and Poland, the Israeli Itim news agency and Israel Radio reported.

Simcha Dinitz, chairman of the quasi-governmental Jewish Agency which handles immigrant transportation, confirmed a "dramatic increase" in Jewish immigration over the last days.

"In the last 18 hours, we have reached a peak of 21 planes landing at Ben-Gurion (airport near Tel Aviv), which have brought 3,500 immigrants from the Soviet Union to Israel. In the next 12 hours there will be another 1,500 immigrants to arrive from the Soviet Union," he said.

"The reasons for this dramatic increase," Dinitz added, "are the improved transportation arrangements which the Jewish Agency had achieved and also the recent tension in the Soviet Union which prompted more immigrants to arrive."

In a statement read to the AP by his spokesman, Dinitz said a total of over 30,000 Soviet Jews are expected to reach Israel in December and that the agency's transit stations in eastern Europe can accommodate up to 50,000 people a month. However, according to Israeli reports, only some 30,000 Soviet Jews hold valid emigration permits.

The reported panic exodus appears to be linked to the present political turmoil in the Soviet Union and the surprise resignation of Shevardnadze.

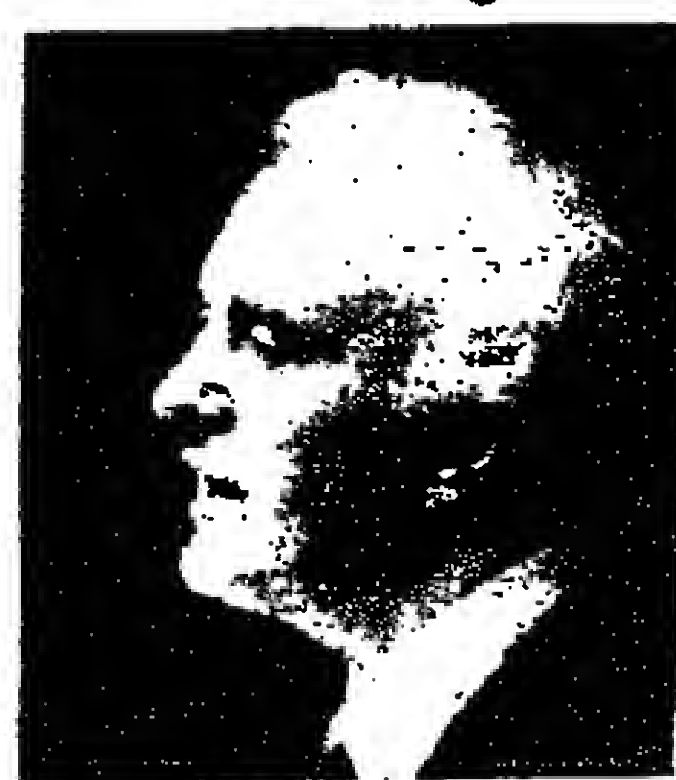
Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, referring to the resignation, said Israel was "a little worried, because relations with Shevardnadze have been excellent every time I had a chance to meet him."

"But I don't think there is a reason for a special concern. I mean immigration," Shamir said on Israel Radio. "I don't see any reason for the wave of immigration to stop."

Israel is also expecting 20,000 Ethiopian Jews to immigrate during 1991 under an agreement signed by the government of Haile Mengistu Mariam in Addis Ababa. But reports indicate that the Israeli society is resistant to accepting them as evident in refusals to rent them apartments and to employ them.

No change in Gulf policy, Soviet spokesman says

MOSCOW (A) — Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze defended himself against conservative criticism of his foreign policy in his resignation speech Thursday, denying that he planned to send Soviet troops to the Gulf.



Eduard Shevardnadze

"No one is planning to send there even one soldier, even one representative of the armed forces of the USSR," Shevardnadze said.

But he said that "if the interests of the Soviet people suffer, if even one person suffers, no matter where it happens, not only in Iraq, the Soviet nation and the Soviet government will defend the interests of its citizens."

The Soviet Union has been highly critical of the Aug. 2 invasion of Kuwait by Iraq, a close Kremlin ally. Moscow has supported a U.S.-sponsored U.N. resolution allowing the use of force if Baghdad does not pull out by Jan. 15. The cooperation between the superpowers has been closer than on any other issue since World War II.

The Kremlin, however, has refused to send its own forces to the Gulf.

A Foreign Ministry spokesman said the current Soviet policy on the Gulf "responds to the interests of our people" and he hoped it would not change under Shevardnadze's successor.

In his resignation speech to the Congress of People's Deputies, Shevardnadze bristled and appeared exasperated at suggestions that lawmakers adopt a resolution forbidding the leadership from sending troops to the Gulf, labelling such calls "the last straw."

"Some of the speakers say that the minister of foreign affairs has plans to deploy troops to the Persian Gulf," Shevardnadze said. "I have explained. I have said that we have no plans. They do not exist."

Shevardnadze said last month that Moscow would not hesitate to send troops to the Gulf if any of the Soviet citizens trapped there were harmed.

But he also said Moscow was not planning to commit forces to any international military action. The influential conservative Soyuz (Union) group has accused Shevardnadze of secretly

planning to use Soviet soldiers in the Gulf.

Shevardnadze said the Soviet Union has "very good, friendly relations with Iraq, which have been built for years, and these relations are still preserved, but we do not have any moral right to agree to the aggression by Iraq, to the annexation of a very small country which cannot defend itself."

"Then we would have crossed out everything that has been done in recent years by all our people in the sphere of establishing the principles of new political thinking," he said.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Vitaly Churkin, speaking later Thursday, said Shevardnadze believed the foreign policy enacted in the name of President Mikhail Gorbachev would continue under the next foreign minister.

"The policy towards the Gulf is one of the most important ones. We are convinced this policy responds to the interests of our people. We of course hope this main bearing will not be changed," Churkin said.

"The guarantee of this is that this policy is associated first of all with the name of our president, Mikhail Gorbachev," he said.

Asked whether there would be any changes in Soviet policy towards Washington and February's scheduled summit, Churkin underscored Shevardnadze's contributions in establishing good relations with the United States.

"We would wish that this steady process of enlargement and improvement in our relations with the United States ... should continue and develop," he said.

Amnesty says Habre executed 300 before fleeing

LONDON (AP) — Amnesty International said Friday more than 300 political prisoners were executed by members of Chad's presidential guard shortly before President Hissene Habre fled to Cameroon on Dec. 1.

The London-based human rights group said those killed had been detained in secret at the president's headquarters in the capital of N'djamena. Many bodies were found in the headquarters while others appear to have been thrown in the nearby Chari River. Amnesty said in a written statement.

The Nobel Peace Prize-winning group urged Chad's new president, Idriss Deby, to introduce measures to prevent similar killings of political prisoners in the future.

It called for an inquiry into the fate of hundreds of political prisoners who "disappeared" between 1982 and 1990 during Habre's term as president.

Amnesty International said several hundred political prisoners were released Dec. 1 after Habre and other senior government officials were ousted and fled to neighbouring Cameroon.

The newly released prisoners had been detained at various secret locations in the capital. Most had been held and many tortured at the site of a former swimming pool near U.S. and U.N. offices, Amnesty said.

Other political prisoners had been held secretly at a house used by former Interior Minister Djimet Togou, Amnesty International said.

Before Habre fled, Amnesty International had appealed for information about more than 100 political prisoners known to have been arrested in 1987 and 1989.

The organisation said 20 of the estimated 200 released on Dec. 1 were among those on the Amnesty International list. The group said that it appears that the others perished in prison.

Israeli plan could get 60,000 Palestinians fired

TEL AVIV (AP) — Economics Minister David Magen said Thursday he has won wide government backing for a plan that would throw out of their jobs nearly two-thirds of the 108,000 Palestinians from the occupied territories working in Israel.

The plan is designed to free jobs for Soviet Jewish immigrants and cut the number of Palestinians coming to Israel at a time of increased resistance activities, said Magen adviser Eldad Halachmi.

Such attacks have been urged by leaders of the Palestinian uprising. Last week, three Jews were stabbed to death inside an Israeli factory, and the Muslim fundamentalist group Hamas claimed responsibility.

"Employers now prefer Jewish workers instead of Arabs because of the recent violence. There is a lot of apprehension and fear," said Yossi Ahimie, a spokesman for Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir.

Some Palestinians hailed the Magen plan as a first step towards economic autonomy from Israel, but others warned that it would spell disaster for the occupied territories.

Palestinians in the occupied territories observed a general strike Thursday called by uprising leaders to protest the "Judaization of Jerusalem" — the settlement of Jews in the Arab part of the city.

Magen's new plan for limiting Palestinian workers' calls for strict enforcement of the labour laws that have been ignored in the past, allowing Israeli businesses to employ Arabs without work permits and pay them less than the minimum wage.

Of the 108,000 Palestinians working at menial jobs in construction, manufacturing and agriculture, about 70,000 don't have work permits.

It is unlikely Israelis will continue to employ as many Arabs if they must have work permits, meaning they must receive the minimum wage and such benefits as pensions and health insurance.

An inter-ministerial committee headed by Magen's office recommended raising fines for employers from \$250 to \$1,000 for each violation of labour laws, along with an extra fine of \$150 for each day an illegal worker is employed, Halachmi said.

Magen told Israel Radio on Thursday that the plan won approval this week from all ministries involved. It now has to go to the cabinet for formal approval.

Magen said he expected about 60,000 Palestinians to lose their jobs as a result of the new restrictions.

Palestinian economist Fawaz Abu Sitta said mass layoffs would have disastrous consequences in the impoverished Gaza Strip where 70 per cent of the 750,000 people are refugees.

About 65,000 Gazans, or half the local labour force, are employed in Israel, including 40,000 working without permits, Abu Sitta said.

"There is little chance that those fired will find new jobs in Gaza," he said.

Abu Sitta said several Gaza labourers have reported being turned away at an army checkpoint at the entrance of Israel in recent days after they could not produce work permits.

The situation in the West Bank is only slightly better than in Gaza. Palestinians have said that Israel has systematically hampered economic development in both territories to safeguard a pool of cheap Arab labour and create a captive market for Israeli goods.

Magen acknowledged some efforts to block development in Gaza and the West Bank, but he said he now hoped to encourage investment. He added, however, only Palestinian businesses that do not compete with Israeli industry would receive help.

Palestinian journalist Daoud Kuttab said the Magen plan was a positive step towards Palestinian autonomy.

"It might be a bit too quick, and it's going to cause a lot of hardship, but it's going to lead to economic separation, which we hope will be at the forefront of a political separation," he said.

Text of Resolution 681, separate statement

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — Here is the text of Security Council Resolution 681, criticising Israel's plan to expel Palestinians from the occupied territories and giving U.S. staff authority to monitor the situation:

The Security Council, REAFFIRMING the obligations of member states under the United Nations Charter, REAFFIRMING further the principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war set forth in Security Council Resolution 242 (1967),

HAVING received the report of the secretary-general submitted in accordance with Security Council Resolution 672 (1990) on ways and means for ensuring the safety and protection of the Palestinian civilians under Israeli occupation and in particular taking note of paragraphs 20-26 therein (S-21919),

TAKING note of the interest of the secretary-general to visit and send his envoy to pursue his initiative with the Israeli authorities, as indicated in paragraph 22 of the report of the secretary-general (S-21919),

and of their recent invitation extended to him, GRAVELY concerned at the dangerous deterioration of the situation in all the Palestinian territories occupied by Israel since 1967, including Jerusalem, and at the violence and rising tension in Israel,

TAKING into consideration the statement made by the president of the Security Council 20 December, 1990 concerning the method and approach for a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Arab-Israeli conflict, RECALLING ITS RESOLUTIONS 607 (1988), 608 (1988), 636 (1989), and 611 (1989) and alarmed by the decision of the government of Israel to deport four Palestinians from the occupied territories in contravention of its obligations under the Fourth Geneva Convention,

1. Expresses its appreciation to the secretary-general for his report contained in document S-21919;

2. Expresses its grave concern over the rejection by Israel of Security Council Resolutions 672 (1990) and 673 (1990);

3. Deplores the decision by the government of Israel, the occupying power, to resume deportations of Palestinian civilians in the occupied territories;

4. Urges the government of Israel to accept de jure applicability of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, to all the territories occupied by Israel since 1967, and to abide scrupulously by the provisions of the said convention;

5. Calls on the high contracting parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 to ensure respect by Israel, the occupying power, for its obligations under the Fourth Geneva Convention in accordance with Article 1;

6. Requests the secretary-general in cooperation with the International Committee of the Red Cross to develop further the idea from the report of the secretary-general (S-21919) of convening a meeting of the high contracting parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention and to discuss possible measures that might be taken by them under the convention and for this purpose to invite these parties to submit their views on how the idea could contribute to the goals of the convention as well as on other relevant matters and to report to the council;

7. Requests the secretary-general to monitor and observe the situation regarding Palestinian civilians under Israeli occupation, making new efforts in this regard on an urgent basis, and to utilise and designate or draw upon the United Nations and other personnel and resources present there in the area and elsewhere needed to accomplish this task and to keep the Security Council regularly informed;

8. Requests further the secretary-general to submit a first progress report to the Security Council by the first week of March 1991, and every four months thereafter and decides to remain seized of the matter as necessary.

Here is the text of the non-binding statement on the prospects for a Middle East peace conference:

The members of the Security Council reaffirm their determination to support an active negotiating process in which all relevant parties should participate leading to a comprehensive, just and lasting peace to the Arab-Israeli conflict through negotiations which should be based on Resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) of the Security Council and which should take into account the right to security of all states in the region, including Israel, and the legitimate political rights of the Palestinian people.

In this context they agree that an international conference, at an appropriate time, properly structured, should facilitate efforts to achieve a negotiated settlement and lasting peace in the Arab-Israeli conflict.

However, the members of the council are of the view that there is no unanimity as to when would be the appropriate time for such a conference.

In the view of the members of the council, the Arab-Israeli conflict is important and unique and must be addressed independently, on its own merits.

MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

Egyptian policeman faces trial

CAIRO (AP) — A police conscript accused of killing four Israelis in a cross-border attack last month will be tried by a military court Saturday, Egypt's government agency said. The Middle East News Agency said the trial of Ayman Mohammad Hassan, 22, will be at Suez and will be public. The agency gave no details of charges or what penalty is being sought by the prosecution. Under Egyptian law, premeditated murder is punishable by death or by long imprisonment if extenuating circumstances are proved. Cairo newspaper reports on the investigation said Hassan confessed that he opened fire on Israeli vehicles and that he acted alone. On Nov. 25, a lone, uniformed gunman infiltrated from Egypt about 300 metres across the Sinai border into Israel. He shot at a bus and three military vehicles with an automatic rifle, killing four and wounding 27.

Church accuses Iran of hanging pastor

NICOSIA (R) — A Christian Evangelical church said Thursday Iran had hanged one of its ministers after two months of torture and imprisonment. The Assemblies of God, saying it was quoting sources inside Iran, reported that Hossein Soodmand — 55, Iranian and a convert from Islam — was hanged in Mashhad in northeast Iran on Dec. 3. Soodmand was accused of spying, "a charge dismissed as preposterous by friends who knew him," said a statement sent to Reuters in Nicosia. Iranian officials were not available for comment.

Two killed in shootout in Algeria

ALGIERS (R) — A gunman and a senior policeman were killed in a shootout near the central Algerian town of Sour El Ghazlane Thursday, the official news agency APS reported. Police were called to a house in Bordj Ghiss, about 90 kilometres southeast of Algiers, to deal with a group of four armed men and were met with a burst of gunfire, it said. Police fired back and captured the three other members of the group but the head of the police unit was killed in the exchange of fire. Police seized a submachinegun, an automatic pistol, knives and an axe, APS said. The agency gave no clue to the identity of the group.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION	
Tel: 77111-19	
PROGRAMME ONE	
15:00	Teletext
15:30	Koran
15:45	Programme review
17:30	Children programme
17:50	Educational programme
18:00	New Summary
18:10	Local series
19:50	Programme review
20:00	News in Arabic
20:30	Arabic series
21:30	Programme review
21:50	Local programme
22:30	Arabic series
23:00	News in Arabic
23:10	Series continued
PROGRAMME TWO	
18:00	Fruits of Passion
19:00	News in French
19:15	Aujourd'hui en France
20:00	News in Arabic
20:30	Good Morning Miss Bliss
21:00	Encounter
21:30	Feature film: "Children of A Lesser God"
22:00	News in English
22:30	Continuation of the film
PRAYER TIMES	
05:05	Fajr
06:27	Sunrise (Dhuhr)
11:34	Dhuhr

CHURCHES	
14:18	"Asr"
16:41	"Maghrib"
18:04	"Isha"
CHURCHES	
St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swetich, Tel. 810740	
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785	
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590	
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440	
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757	
Terraviva Church Tel. 622366	
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541	
Anglican Church Tel. 625383, Tel. 625343	
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331	
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775251	
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751	
Assam International Church Tel. 683326	
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811295	
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 815817, 654932	
WEATHER	
Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.	
It will be partly cloudy and relatively cold and winds will be northwesterly	

GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Repairs	623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs	661101
Jordan Television	772111
Radio Jordan	774111
Water Authority	680100
Jordan Electricity Authority	815615
Electric Power	
Company	636381
RJ Flight Information	06-53200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport	06-53200

ZARQA:	
Zarqa Govt. Hospital	(09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital	(09)991071
Ibn Sina Hospital	(09)986732
REPAIRS:	
Princess Basma Hospital	(02)275555
Greek Catholic Hospital	(02)277275
Al Nafes Hospital	(02)277100
AQABA:	
Princess Haya Hospital	(03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)53200-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

06:05	Singapore, Kuala Lumpur (RJ)
18:00	Damascus (RJ)
18:15	Cairo (RJ)
18:20	Dhahran (RJ)
18:30	Bahrain (GF)

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:

Hussein Medical Centre	813813/32
Khalid Maternity, J. Amn.	6442816
Akileh Maternity, J. Amn.	6424412
Jabal Amman Maternity	642362
Malha, J. Amman	636140
Palestine, Shawcasi	6441714
Shawcasi Hospital	669131
University Hospital	843045
Al-Musharraf Hospital	6672779
The Islamic, Abdali	660127/37
Al-Ahli, Abdali	6661646
Rafan, Al-Mutajreen	771013
Al-Bashir, J. Amn	775112/26
Arady, Marja	891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital	60224050
Amal Hospital	674155

Jordan Times

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When time is right?

AT LONG last the U.N. Security Council has arrived at a compromise formula on the deteriorating situation in the occupied Palestine that seemed to have won the support of all the members of the council. The sticking point that had prevented the permanent and non-permanent members from agreeing on a resolution for over two months was whether or not to refer to the international peace conference's idea on the Arab-Israeli conflict. The U.S. position prevailed and the principle of holding a peace conference was relegated to a mere statement by the council's president, Yemeni Ambassador Abdullah Saleh Ashtal, that the convening of such a conference would come at an appropriate time in the future. Washington purposely kept the peace parley's formula from the preambular and operative paragraphs of Resolution 681 for fear that its inclusion in the text would offer a reward to Iraq. Baghdad has been insisting on establishing a link between the Gulf crisis and other Middle East issues, but found no support from even some Arab countries. To drive home more effectively the negative link between the two situations, the U.S. tried to have the president of the council also state that the Arab-Israeli conflict constitutes a separate issue that needs to be addressed independently.

The question that comes to the fore here is why the council took so long to agree on such a watered-down draft. When the U.S. succeeds in not only down-grading the Middle East conflicts but also makes the president of the council mumble a few vague words on them, one wonders whether the entire exercise was worth the two-month effort put into it. To merely state after such prolonged negotiations and informal consultations among the council's members that an international conference "properly structured" could be convened at "an appropriate time" in the future is an open-ended formula that adds nothing and takes nothing away. In the final analysis of the Arab-Israeli conflict, especially the Palestinian problem, it would not depend on the kind of language being used by the council members at the end of their debates on them. The Arab side is not interested in semantic or formal links between the Middle East conflicts and those belonging to other parts of the world be they in South-East Asia or Latin America. In principle the Arab World has no quarrel with the proposition that its region's problems should be solved on their own merits. The crux of the matter lies in the fact that these questions need to be effectively addressed on the basis of the relevant U.N. resolutions adopted on them. And the heart of the matter is the proposition that the charter of the U.N. and its principal resolutions are inseparable. After 23 years of waiting the Arab side is entitled to know when this "appropriate time" for convening a conference on the Palestinian problem is going to occur. And what is even more important than holding such a conference is to provide the necessary political will on the part of the permanent members of the council, especially the U.S., to apply faithfully and effectively the council's own resolutions on the occupied Arab territories. There was a time when the Arab side recognised that without attaining a strategic balance between the Arabs and Israel there was no way they could negotiate equally with the Jewish state in any given forum be it the international conference or otherwise. With so many Western and Arab countries now threatening Iraq's military might, one wonders if the "appropriate time" for holding the parley in the minds of such powers would be when Iraq is destroyed and the cumulative Arab strength is sapped completely. Then, there would be no need for an international conference to mark the demise of the Arab bargaining position.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

Al Rai Arabic daily expressed the view that those who obstruct the implementation of international legitimacy with regard to the Palestine question have no right to brag about the international legitimacy with regard to the Gulf crisis. The paper, referring to Washington's obstruction of a U.N. Security Council resolution which calls for protection to the Palestinians against Israeli atrocities, said that it is Washington's encouragement to the Zionist leaders that is causing further oppression and further sufferings for the Palestinians whose lands are occupied by Israel. The paper said that the United States is pressuring the Security Council not to take any action vis-a-vis Israel, and not to impose any form of sanctions on the Jewish state for its illegal practices in the occupied Arab lands, at a time when it brags about the importance of applying international legitimacy in the Gulf crisis. Washington's encouragement to the Jewish state, said the paper, was manifested clearly by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir who announced that his government will pursue the policy of deportation in open and flagrant defiance of the international community and U.N. principles and norms. The United States which continues to impede the work of the Security Council, is not only showing collusion with the Zionists against the Palestinians, but is taking active part in the perpetuating repression in Palestine, said the paper. Shamir had said that during his visit to Washington, President Bush promised never to give any concessions to Iraq at the expense of Israel, the paper recalled. It said that by giving such promise, Bush has declared his total refusal to deal with the Palestine question, and by pursuing his policies with regard to the Gulf issue, the president is aiming to launch aggression on Iraq to destroy an Arab power that could be used against Israel, thus providing support and protection for the Israeli aggressors rather than the oppressed Palestinians.

Al Dustour daily described a visit to the Gulf and the foreign forces deployed there by the U.S. defence secretary and the head of the joint chiefs of staff of the American forces as part of America's escalation of tension and a form of threat directed to Iraq.

View from Amman

IT goes without saying that the call for an Arab-Arab dialogue issued by His Majesty King Hussein emanates from his rational and ethical approach to the problems of the area. Even before the crisis commenced on Aug. 2, King Hussein had been attempting to contain it within the Arab fold. Several reasons account for this insistence on an Arab solution. First, because it will be an expression of the will of the direct partners to the conflict. Second, because it gives credibility to the idea that the Arabs can, on occasion, solve their own problems without being static or falling for interference from the outside. And third, because any other solution, imposed or manipulated from outside, will constitute a bone of contention between the now belligerent parties. A bone of contention that will certainly give rise to further strife and conflict.

Yet, while saying all this, we must remember a few facts about the present Arab situation. Never in recorded memory have the Arabs been more discordant and divided than they appear at this moment. It is a fact that some Arab parties, for their own reasons, are advocating the use of force against Iraq. These, in the heat of the present crisis and its poisoned atmosphere seem to have forgotten the fact that after the dust is settled and the battle is ended, they will have to live with themselves, not to mention the need to live with their Iraqi brothers and neighbours.

And while some of the Arab parties seem to have lost control over their own destiny, having others decide for them, or do their fighting, they ought to be reminded that their present day friends have been the cause of most, if not all the area's problems, beginning with the Palestinian and the Lebanese problems and ending with all border disputes in the region.

A case for dialogue

How can a meaningful dialogue be conducted when the international atmosphere, as well as the Arab atmosphere is so tense, so unbalanced, so poisoned? Has any meaningful dialogue ever taken place in the shadow of such threats and at the tip of a bayonet? When has the international community ever conducted a dialogue with such a time table and under such a definite time deadline?

President Bush has already explained what he means by the meetings he called for between himself and Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz and between U.S. Secretary of State James Baker and President Saddam Hussein. President Bush emphasised that these meetings are for nothing more than to tell the Iraqi leadership face to face to "get out of Kuwait" or else "I am not in a negotiating mood." (Time, 17/12/90, P. 13) he said. If that is the message, then it is not a dialogue in the first place, and in the second place, the Iraqis have already received it. So why should they be in a hurry to get the threatening meetings over with?

So it comes to pass that neither on the international level, nor on the Arab level, is the mood for negotiations, not to mention a meaningful dialogue, present.

Should much Iraqi blood spill and Iraqi power be pulverised those responsible will eventually be made accountable by their own people. We are in agreement that Iraq must pull out of Kuwait and a legitimate government be installed in that country. We are not in agreement that the only way to achieve this goal is through the use of force. Time tends to heal all wounds; and time will certainly cause the Iraqi leadership to come to terms with its Kuwaiti brothers; time and not the present heightened tensions.

Further, it took the Americans decades to get the Chinese, the Vietnamese, the North Koreans, even the Russians to come to terms with the present international order of things. What's the hurry, or rather, why the rush in the case of Iraq? For what cause is the use of force contemplated?

The United States must remember that in spite of all the acrimony, vicissitudes and difficult relations it has had with individual Arab states or with the Arabs collectively, no war, no individual mass spill of blood has ever occurred between them. Should Iraq be attacked such a deed would tend to undermine the very regimes that the United States is ostensibly now protecting. The United States should also remember that the reduction of Iraqi power will create a vacuum: A vacuum that will ultimately create further havoc and instability in the area. Already we are made aware that Israel, Turkey and Iran have their own scenarios as to how to deal with the new situation.

It is in view of these facts and others that any contemplation of the use of force must be abandoned. Given some time and some relaxation in the level of the present tension, the Arab-Arab dialogue may develop into a meaningful avenue through which solutions can be hammered out. King Hussein's efforts to promote the idea should receive support. Jordan's perception of the present Gulf crisis, as indeed all other crises in the area must be solved with an eye to the future. A future whereby the present-day enemies will have, ultimately, to live with each other. That in addition to our realisation that we stand to become an arena for battling armies, as well as our belief that violence does not solve, but complicates matters stands behind our promotion of dialogue: Arab-Arab and Iraqi-American.

U.S. forces, Saudi Arabia and the Christmas spirit

By Richard Walker
Reuters

WITH U.S. FORCES IN THE GULF — Western forces in the Gulf are taking special precautions for Christmas to keep celebration of next week's Christmas holy day from offending their Muslim hosts.

Regular Christian and Jewish worship is being openly conducted by military chaplains or lay leaders for U.S. and allied Western forces operating in international waters off the Red Sea and the Gulf and in nearby emirates.

But in Saudi Arabia, spiritual heartland for Muslims the world over, such worship is being kept out of sight to avoid upsetting local citizens or authorities in the devout Muslim nation.

"Religion has been a problem since the first day," said a senior U.S. military official, who spoke on condition that he not be identified.

"We've always had religious services in Saudi Arabia, but the government let us know that, 'if you flaunt it, we've got to do something about it.' We'll continue, but we won't publicize it," he added.

Soldiers and chaplains have been warned not to display crosses, stars of David or other religious symbols openly in public or around Saudi soldiers or civilians.

Chaplains are also typically listed as "Morale" officers on public notices, using code



words to advise troops of religious services.

Christmas, second holiest day on the Western Christian calendar, poses a special challenge because of its role also as a special family holiday even in nations where church attendance is low, chaplains and officers told Reuters.

Secular trappings of Christmas among allied soldiers in Saudi Arabia are far more open than any religious signs. Christmas presents addressed to "any serviceman" have poured in from the United

States, said 1st Lieutenant Steve Turner, an air force spokesman.

Christmas trees have sprouted in numerous military sites, greeting cards depicting a camel in a Santa Claus costume have been exchanged and some units have made mock desert "snowmen" by piling sandbags on top of each other.

But preparations are also being made so soldiers can mark the religious feast celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ just as Jews have had their eight-day observance of Hanu-

kah that recalls their ancestors' fight for religious freedom in the ancient world.

On board the USS John F. Kennedy with its 5,000-plus crew, Chief Chaplain Captain James O'Connor said attendance at Catholic, Protestant and other services has steadily risen since the aircraft carrier was deployed for the Gulf crisis and even sparked formation of a small Muslim congregation.

"For Christmas, we're trying not to overdo it because that would only deepen the pain for

the men who have to be away from home," he said.

"I use the word low-key, but we will celebrate these holy days appropriately with a Christmas Eve candlelight service for Protestants and a midnight mass for Catholics. We'll sing Christmas carols on the mess decks and have roaming guitarists," O'Connor added.

The British Broadcasting Corporation plans a Christmas Eve television programme using satellites to link British and other allied soldiers in Bahrain to families in Germany and

England with a sermon by Archbishop of Canterbury Robert Runcie.

But the military says discretion remains vital on Saudi soil. There is more at stake than the danger of Western soldiers running foul of customs in the Kingdom where Islam is the only legal religion and laws are based on the Koran.

The wider peril, authorities said, is that any religious controversy could quickly become a propaganda weapon for Iraq's Saddam Hussein, whose invasion of Kuwait is regularly denounced by Saudis and other Gulf states as tarnishing the image of Islam.

Iraq's secularist Muslim ruler has already invoked the mantle of Islam for himself. He has called for "holy war" to keep Western troops from "desecrating" the Muslim holy sites of Mecca and Medina in Western Saudi Arabia of which King Fahd is the special "custodian".

"It's a very sensitive subject," conceded U.S. Army Colonel William Mulvey, chief spokesman for the allies' joint information bureau in Dhahran which has kept journalists from covering worship by military units in Saudi Arabia.

"Our concern is that Iraq not be able to use the religious freedom that's being permitted here against the host country. We don't want to lose that freedom."

The different elements of peace

By Dr. Saleh Ershaidat

IT IS HARD to imagine that war will break out in the Gulf despite the huge military buildup in the region on both sides of the fence and despite the numerous anti-Iraqi resolutions passed by the U.N. Security Council in the past months. Most of the political analysts and strategists have ruled out the option of war since the Aug. 2 invasion of Kuwait, simply because of the high cost of such a war and its direct and indirect consequences on the world at large. But it has to be pointed out that any peaceful option can by no means achieve for the United States any of its strategic targets in the Gulf region including the destruction of Iraq's military power and political leadership. Therefore, any moves towards settling the Gulf issue within the no-war-no-peace concept and within the negotiations as proposed by Iraq and accepted by the United States recently, would have to hinge on two choices or options:

First: The United States will consider Iraq and its military, economic and political power as a new partner in the international equilibrium, which means that Iraq will be given due recognition in Middle Eastern affairs directly related to the Arab-Israeli conflict on the one hand and the future of oil wealth on the other.

Second: Stalling a solution for the present Gulf crisis and trying to divide it into a number of smaller issues with the purpose of defusing the tension and gaining time to allow for re-organising matters and preparing for a new round of dealings with Iraq aimed at destroying that country economically and militarily, to ensure America's total domination over the oil fields within the context of a new American policy in the region depending on alliances with local governments.

If we are to discuss the two options from an objective point of view and in the light of the present world realities, we will find that in the first above mentioned option, namely "Western recognition of Iraq as a major regional power to be reckoned with" would have been more likely had the events in the Gulf occurred a long time earlier. This is because the world's strategic balance has now been heavily tipped in favour of the United States following Moscow's exit at the end of the cold war; and in the light of America's obvious influence and polarisation moves in Europe and Asia as best witnessed in the Gulf crisis. The division within the Arab World into a group supporting and the other opposing Iraq has lessened the influence of the Iraqi alliance. It should be noted that the Jewish state and its future in the region are behind all the difficulties impeding strategic balance between the two sides, simply because of Israel's strategic importance to America and its allies in the West.

What we conclude from this debate is that it is rather difficult for us to see a scenario in which America recognises Iraq as a strategic power to be reckoned with in international conflicts. The second option which is more likely to be accepted and to materialise in the coming stage is namely breaking up the crisis into smaller issues. This can take the form of opening negotiations in a bid to try to interpret U.N. Security Council resolutions, with

each side trying to make it more palatable to its own taste, and trying also to gain more time. I believe that the breaking up of the crisis into separate matters is convenient to many parties including those serving under the American umbrella like France and Japan which tried to adopt independent stands with regard to the Gulf crisis for their own reasons. These nations realise that any war in the Gulf means the devastation of the oil installations which feed their industrial power. They also realise that war in the Gulf could bring about strategic changes in the region, depriving many countries of certain privileges bearing in mind that regional powers like Iran would exploit the conflict to fill the vacuum that might result from a war and lay its hands on the oil fields. I believe that the second option of breaking up the crisis into smaller issues is suitable to many parties of the region involved in the crisis, because each side would consider that such option would serve its own strategies and objectives.

For example Iraq, whose leaders realise the dangers in fragmenting the issue, believes that negotiations with the Americans is a formal recognition of Iraq's power, and that such negotiation would necessarily take place from an Iraqi position of strength. This would be interpreted by Iraq to mean a political and military victory. Such state of affairs would no doubt enhance Iraq's position in the Arab World and in the international arena. Indeed Iraq would through this option, look as the party which succeeded in not only defusing tension but also in attaining its rights. The result would be a reshuffling of the political set up in the oil rich Arabian Gulf region, with the idea of distributing the Arab oil wealth to various Arab development schemes becoming more acceptable to all Arabs.

Needless to say that through negotiations with America, the Iraqis would certainly insist on linking the Palestine issue with the Gulf crisis because they consider the Palestine question as the source of all tension, in the region. Should this happen, Iraq would gain considerable support from other Arab countries. On the other hand, the United States, the undisputed leader of the new world, through accepting the option of breaking up the Gulf crisis into smaller issues, would try to achieve its own strategies and objectives. The United States would try for instance to reduce Iraq's military power and weaken its political leadership through a long-term strategy which it believes would ensure its own goals. Washington could resort to maintaining an economic and technological embargo on Iraq, depriving it of the chance of acquiring spare parts and other necessities, now that Baghdad is not relying on Moscow which has aligned itself with America. The United States might also resort to creating border problems for Iraq to cause trouble with its neighbours.

The second option would indeed offer America numerous economic and strategic privileges. We should remember that negotiations normally take a very long time and can offer a legitimate cover for the United States forces to remain in the Gulf for as long as possible. The United States might in that case ask the Gulf states to seek permanent American bases to be

established along the whole Gulf coast to boost their military balance vis-a-vis Iraq. The presence of American forces in the Gulf states is bound to end up imposing a political and economic American influence, forcing these Arab states to switch to American products, American technology and American services etc... Perhaps Britain is seeking a war in the Gulf to prevent that from happening and to ensure a lasting British influence in that region.

But due to expected rivalry between the United States and Europe there might be some basic changes in the region. One can easily perceive France's new stand in the world which was best manifested during the Gulf crisis when Paris tried to free itself of American hegemony. This stand is being taken by France in view of its vast economic interests in Iraq and the Gulf, and because now that the Soviet Union is out of the international struggle for superpower supremacy, France is aware that European unity is bound to come in 1992 and perhaps it is interested in seeing itself as a leader of the united Europe, playing a key role in world's position.

On the other hand there is the role of the Jewish state which have proved to be serving as a frontline base for aggression, and as the policeman of the region. Israel for its part will of course be disturbed by any political option because it believes that the Iraqi military power is bound to be boosted in a climate of peace and later would form a direct threat to Israel's expansionist objectives. Despite Israel's close alliance with the United States the Jewish state tries by all possible means to circumvent America's policies by launching acts of aggression on Iraq now and then with a view to weakening its military and economic power. Israel's real fear is to see Iraq creating a major Arab front capable of imposing the options of peace or war on the Jewish state, or at least to force the implementation of U.N. Security Council resolutions concerning Palestine.

What remains is the position of the Arab states which had been betting on a military solution and Iraq's loss. Now that America has accepted the idea of negotiating with Iraq, these Arab states which have aligned themselves behind Washington would find themselves unable to explain their own position and would leave matters for history and the turn out of events to decide their government's positions.

Iraq and its allies are now called on to stand together to utilise the present success in a manner that would offer the best service to various Arab causes, especially the Palestine question. The Palestinians realise that Iraq's military might and steadfastness, and its strong bargaining position is a golden opportunity for the Palestine issue that might not present itself once again. What is required from the "steadfastness front" now is to plug all the loopholes through which the enemies of the Arab Nation might get through, especially Israel which is lying in wait for the Arabs. The Iraqi front should abort the enemy's plots aimed at depriving the Arab Nation of achieving part of its aspirations.

Prince

(Continued from page 1)

attacked, the Crown Prince said. "I think it is important, but at the same time it is not yet formalised by the Security Council. You see on the one side, you have Baker saying 'I would be representing the Security Council and U.N. resolutions in visiting Baghdad,' and President Bush saying that he would have to take action to implement Security Council resolutions, and yet at the same time that action is clearly directed at Iraq's owning chemical weapons and biological weapons. So the attempt to dispel that by saying Iraq, for example, has opened its facilities to international inspection are dispelled. So the momentum is clearly there on the ground. Then the old dictum 'when armies move war happens' is clearly what we are living today."

In reply to a question on former British Prime Minister Edward Heath's testimony in the U.S. Congress that renewed the prospect of an Arab solution, the Crown Prince said:

"The Algerians are still willing to contribute. We are willing to contribute and others in the region are certainly willing to contribute to an Arab discussion as stipulated by paragraph 3 of Resolution 660. And the full implementation of that resolution calls for unconditional withdrawal and direct discussion between Iraq and Kuwait. However, the U.S. today does appear to be extremely uncomfortable about any Arab discussion, any compromise which might unsettle or disturb the coalition. So I think if the intellectual generosity existed to go the last mile, then it should include a support for this inter-Arab discussion."

In reply to another question, the Crown Prince said:

"A month ago some suggested I was exaggerating the cost of war when I was talking to doctors who proceeded to Baghdad, Doctors Against Nuclear War. And when we learn that this military buildup is costing \$30,000 a second, one hour (of) which will cover our health costs today, when we learn that effectively conventional health services will not be able to cope even with a conventional war, when we envisage over a million evacuees at minimum coming in from Iraq, Jordan is already reeling with the loss of the equivalent of 110 per cent of its GDP and a million people under the poverty line. I have every reason to be sombre. I am hosting a roundtable in the beginning of January just to serve notice on so many friends in the international community. I do not want to wait until television show the misery. I want to point out what the possibilities are of the tragedy that is unfolding."

Resolution

(Continued from page 1)

The Foreign Relations Committee of the Lower House of Parliament, echoed Izzeddin's assessment and described the resolution as a "step forward." Although Resolution 681 "does not completely satisfy the basic elements demanded in the light of the situation in the West Bank, it does contain some positive elements that must be noted," Masri, a former foreign minister, said in a statement carried by the Jordan News Agency, Petra.

Masri pointed to the reference in the resolution to the occupied

territories and Jerusalem, the resolution's support for holding a meeting of the signatories to the Geneva Convention and its call on the U.N. secretary general to send international observers to the occupied territories.

The resolution, Masri said, "is supposed to pave the way for a clear U.N. presence in the occupied territories to protect the civilian population."

He said any assessment of the resolution and the accompanying statement should take into consideration two elements — the need to link an international peace conference and the Palestinian question to the Gulf crisis and the "American hegemony in the Security Council and its clear influence on the formulation of Security Council resolutions in light of the weak position of other international powers, especially the Soviet Union."

Former Prime Minister Ahmad Obeidat said that in light of the present situation in the Middle East the "resolution will not have any impact on moving the wheels of peace in the region and finding a peaceful, just and permanent resolution to the Arab-Israeli conflict."

Obeidat, chairman of the General Commission for the National Charter, said in a statement to Petra that Resolution 681 does not refer to past resolutions "concerned with the Arab-Israeli conflict — 242 and 338 — and this omission is sufficient reason to say that we cannot consider this new resolution as a positive dimension or a clear direction towards moving the wheels of peace in the region."

Resolution 242 calls for Israeli withdrawal from the territories it occupied in the 1967 war and 338 calls for negotiations on the basis of 242.

Obeidat asserted that the United States has succeeded in its efforts to exclude any significant reference to the idea of linkage between Israel's occupation of Arab territories and the Gulf crisis.

Dr. Kamel Abu Jaber, a political analyst, said there were positive points in the resolution but it was inadequate.

"Although it is vague and weak it is a step in the right direction," he added.

The U.N. resolution drew typical reactions from various Arab countries in line with their respective positions towards the Gulf crisis.

While Egypt and Syria, the two major Arab states in the anti-Iraq coalition led by the U.S., welcomed the resolution, Iraq itself described it as weak.

The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) adopted a cautious approach to the resolution, expressing hope that more would be done to realise the Arab call for an international peace conference on the Middle East.

Israel assailed the United States for adopting what it described as a weak position in the face of pressure in the Security Council.

Egypt's minister of state for foreign affairs, Boutros Ghali, welcomed the resolution as a "positive step towards peace." He said it would "bolster the position of the Palestinian people's demand for their legitimate national rights."

Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Al Sharaa said the Security Council vote "is an important step on the right path."

"The availing of protection to Palestinians under Israeli occupation and the independent communique on the convening of an international peace conference in the suitable time with the approval of the U.S. is the first positive development in the American stand towards the Arab-Israeli conflict," Sharaa said.

Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz accused the council's members of failing under the influence of Israel's guardian, the United States, by failing to include in the resolution a binding call for an international peace conference.

A PLO official said there should be an end to U.S. attempts to obstruct an international conference on the Middle East.

Yasser Abed Rabbo, the chief PLO spokesman, urged "parties involved in the Arab-Israeli conflict to start consultations to prevent any attempt by Washington to obstruct the convening of the international conference."

Abed Rabbo said the PLO expects "quick steps to hold a meeting by the high contracting parties to observe the implementation of the Fourth Geneva Convention and to act quickly to send envoys to the occupied territories."

"International observers should ... intervene to put an end to Israel's repressive measures and to stop the Israeli terrorism it exercises on our people," added Abed Rabbo.

Palestinian nationalists said the resolution fell short of their hopes. Many said they were disappointed that after nearly two months of bargaining, the Security Council did not even agree on means to protect Palestinians.

"We have sought the dispatch of a U.N. force or at least observers to stop Israel from killing Palestinians," said Riyad Al Malki, a Palestinian academic and a noted figure.

"But even the compromise proposal of sending an ombudsman was dropped in favour of a vague statement," he said.

"It would have been better to have the United States veto the resolution and expose its double standard than to adopt such a watered down resolution," he added.

Malki and other Palestinians said they did not anticipate any changes in Israel's treatment of Palestinians as a result of the resolution.

"This resolution is a repetition of previous ones. It will not change anything," said Dr. Zakariya Al Agha, head of the Arab Medical Society in the Gaza Strip.

Iraqi Foreign Minister David Levy denounced the United States for backing the resolution.

He said the Jewish state's guardian ally had been weakened and obsessed by its alliance with Arab and Muslim forces against Iraq.

"There is American weakness. That weakness stems from the dependence of America on that coalition which is siding with it today against Saddam Hussein," Levy told Israeli army radio.

"The American obsession is that if it would be objective and side with Israel the coalition could start falling apart. We think otherwise, because those Arab states need America more than America needs them," he said.

Levy said Israel would not agree to the U.N. monitor plan.

"Without our agreement it means nothing... if something new is set up without Israel's agreement it has no status, Israel will certainly not agree," he said.

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Kasparov draws 21st title game, nears match victory

LYON, France (R) — Champion Garry Kasparov moved closer to holding the world chess crown for another three years with a tough 86-move draw in the 21st game of his match with Anatoly Karpov.

Kasparov successfully defended against a determined attempt by Karpov to win a complicated endgame.

Karpov, who now needs to win all of the three remaining games to regain the crown he held for a decade until 1989, played on doggedly for several hours in a draw position, with

only token winning chances.

Kasparov now leads in the 24-game series 11-1/2 to 9-1/2, with four wins, two losses and 15 draws. Since he needs only a 12-12 result to keep the crown, his grip on the title is virtually assured.

The players remained on stage for about 45 minutes after the end of their four-hour playing session, discussing details of the complicated two-day game.

Despite their bitter rivalry and the protracted fight for the game, the two Soviet grandmasters chatted warmly, obviously

engrossed by the various possibilities hidden in the positions reached in the game.

"It was an interesting game and Kasparov showed his superiority as an analyst. They are talking so much now because they both feel the match is basically over," U.S. grandmaster Lev Alburt said.

The next game is scheduled for Saturday, with Kasparov due to have the advantage of the first move and the white pieces.

Karpov has one time-out remaining which he may use at any time to postpone play.

Alburt said: "Karpov still has some chances to win. The percentage is perhaps about 3-1 in favour of a draw, but about 25 per cent that Karpov will win."

Karpov sacrificed his rook for a bishop and pawn in order to keep hopes of a victory alive.

Kasparov's swift replies made it clear that he and his assistants had done thorough job in their full night of analytical work.

After the first resumption experts felt that Kasparov's accurate defence would most likely be rewarded with a draw.

Aston Villa hopes to cap bad week for Arsenal

LONDON (R) — Resurgent Aston Villa are gunning for Arsenal in Sunday's English Soccer League feature match, hoping to round off a miserable week for the title challengers.

Josef Venglos' Villa, back on form after two barren months, entertain Arsenal in their first televised game since losing to Internazionale of Milan in the UEFA Cup on Nov. 7.

Arsenal for their part will be out to show that the jailing of captain Tony Adams for drunk-driving offences has not affected their football. They will also be looking to extend their unbeaten league start to 18 matches — a club record.

"A lot of eyes will be looking at this game for different reasons," said Villa's Assistant Manager John Ward.

"Arsenal have had a lot of unfortunate publicity and will be looking to put that behind them and get people talking about their football again."

"We have to guard against that and get people talking about our football. We have picked up two wins and a draw in our last three matches although we took a while to get into our stride and are looking to build on that."

Adams, an England international, was jailed for four months Wednesday. Unbeaten Arsenal have said he will return to the team on his release.

In other weekend ties, Manchester United visit Wimbledon with former England captain Bryan Robson playing his final full league game for United in nearly eight months.

Robson is now fully recovered from a double operation on an achilles tendon.

The 33-year-old midfielder left this year's World Cup early with his international career

apparently over. But new England manager Graham Taylor has made it clear Robson could still have a role in the national side.

Crystal Palace, third in the first division, travel to Manchester City with one objective in mind — to stop City's player-manager Peter Reid.

By all accounts Peter is playing brilliantly at the moment. He is a key reason why they are doing so well," Thomas said.

"I have a lot of respect for him and for what he has achieved. It should be quite a contest. I know if I can win the battle then that is half our job done because he is so influential."

City are sixth and, with the possibility of additional places available to English sides in European club competitions next season, will be hoping to maintain their form.

League leaders Liverpool, four points ahead of Arsenal, are at home Saturday to Southampton.

In Scotland, Aberdeen head for Ibrox determined to prevent Rangers from turning the premier division title race into a gentle canter.

Only Aberdeen and Dundee United can realistically expect to overhaul Rangers, and unless Aberdeen wins Saturday a five-point gap could develop at the top of the table.

"I think most of Scotland will be looking to us to get a good result," said Aberdeen manager Alex Smith.

"It is important not only to us but for the rest of Scottish football to keep interest in the title at a high pitch."

Barcelona to appeal suspension of Stoichkov

BARCELONA (AP) — FC Barcelona said Friday it would appeal a Spanish Soccer Federation ruling that suspends top-scoring striker Hristo Stoichkov for six months for clearing a referee.

Club President Jose Luis Nunez said the team would investigate ties to arch-rival Real Madrid among members of the federation's four-man appeals committee, which imposed the sanction late Thursday.

Stoichkov stomped on referee Idelfonso Urizar's foot after the official ejected him for protesting a call during a Dec. 5 Super-cup match between Barcelona and Real Madrid. Urizar was treated on the sidelines by the

Barcelona trainer.

The committee, heeding calls from outraged referees, labelled Stoichkov's action an "aggression" and overrode a Dec. 11 ruling by a federation judge. The judge had said the Bulgarian striker was guilty of a "violent action," a lesser infraction which carried a maximum sentence of two months.

The appeals committee also slapped a 1.8-million-peseta (\$19,000) fine on Stoichkov, more than double the one assessed by federation Judge Jose Javier Forcens.

An additional two-match suspension in the original ruling still stands.

Italy anxious for first European qualifying win

NICOSIA (R) — Italy, struggling to find form in the European Soccer Championship, face lowly Cyprus in a Group Three match Saturday, anxious to notch their first win of the qualifying tournament.

Italian coach Azzeglio Vicini wants no mistakes.

"The players have to understand that we're not going there for the ride," he said.

So far Italy, favourites in their group, have drawn 1-1 against Hungary and 0-0 at home with Soviet Union.

Cyprus, who went down 4-2 against Hungary and 3-0 to Norway, have been hit by a string of injuries.

Key players, including strikers Yiannos Iacovou and George Savvides, will miss the game. Centre back Spyros Kastanas and Captain Yiannos Yiangoudakis are included in the 19-member squad but are not 100 per cent fit.

Cyprus coach Panicos Iacovou is hoping for a repeat of February 1983 when Cyprus scored a respectable 1-1 draw against Italy less than a year after the

Italians had won the World Cup. Iacovou, who this week told reporters that victory and disaster were separated only by a thread, has picked four uncapped players for his line-up.

Vicini has also had problems with injuries and with players off form.

Stalwart Franco Baresi, arguably the best defender in the world, is out hurt and Sampdoria's off-form striker Gianluca Viali has been left out.

His teammate Roberto Mancini, suffering a late injury, has been replaced by Pisa's Lamber to Piovani, joint top scorer in the league with eight goals.

Another Sampdoria player Attilio Lombardo is expected to win his first cap.

The only first choice players from last summer's World Cup who are expected to start against Cyprus are goalkeeper Walter Zenga, defender and Captain Giuseppe Bergomi and Juventus forwards Roberto Baggio and Salvatore Schillaci.

Baggio suffered a minor injury in training this week but should be fit for the match.

Faulty draining blamed for poor state of Italian pitches

ROME (R) — A Sports Ministry commission has blamed shoddy work on draining systems for making four of Italy's showpiece soccer stadiums unsplayable.

In a statement Thursday, the commission said busy schedules at the Milan, Genoa, Turin and Rome grounds — prepared for the World Cup finals at a cost of \$540 million — and a very wet winter exacerbated the problem.

"One can say that the work (on the draining) was badly done," Sports Minister Carlo Tognoli said.

Players and coaches have complained bitterly about the state of the pitches and some, including Internazionale's Andreas Brehme, have blamed them for injuries.

Tognoli ordered the investiga-

tion after matches at Rome's Olympic Stadium and the San Siro in Milan had turned into mudbaths and fixtures at Genoa and Turin had to be postponed Dec. 9.

The statement said roofing built at Milan and Rome for the World Cup in the summer "cannot be considered determining causes of the deterioration (of the pitches)."

The roofing was originally seen as a cause because it allowed less air and light to reach the turf.

But although the commission found the roofing altered the humidity inside the stadiums, the draining systems had not been adapted accordingly. Excess damp was not allowing new turf to root properly.



Franz Beckenbauer

Beckenbauer to stay with Marseille, get new trainer

PARIS (Agencies) — Bernard Tapie, millionaire president of French soccer champions Marseille, has said unsettled team chief Franz Beckenbauer would stay with the club and would get a top class trainer as his new assistant.

"Everything has been sorted out," he said in a television interview after two hours of talks with Beckenbauer, who had earlier threatened to quit the club he joined only three months ago.

Tapie said Beckenbauer, who led the West German national team to success in this year's World Cup finals, had had problems adapting to French club football. He needed an assistant who knew French soccer well and who could communicate with the players.

"It will have to be a great trainer," he said. "His name should be known in the next two or three days."

Beckenbauer had said repeatedly in the last few days that he was prepared to leave the club if certain unspecified problems were not sorted out with Tapie.

"I made a mistake," Tapie said. "I think I have now corrected it. The mistake was to believe you can turn a national team selector for Germany into a trainer with a French club side. It doesn't work like that."

"If we had allowed time, at the end of one and a half to two years, he would have succeeded, of course. The talent is there. But we didn't allow time, myself in particular."

"The fact is that when you don't speak the language at all and when you are learning a new kind of football and when you arrive in mid-season, you need someone else on the technical staff. I have accepted that we will find this personality together."

Tapie, who has unbridled ambitions to see Marseille be-

come the first French winners of the European Cup, said he was not unhappy with Beckenbauer.

"He's not doing bad. We're top of the league by three points and qualified for the European Cup quarter-finals," he added.

Beckenbauer has been under fire in the French media for the erratic form of his expensively assembled side. They have lost five of the 14 matches under his command and were humbled 4-0 this month by championship rivals Auxerre, a small town team with a shoestring budget.

Beckenbauer declined to comment after the talks, telling reporters simply: "I stay, I stay."

As he left a two-hour meeting with Tapie, Beckenbauer was asked if he would stay on with Marseille, which he joined in September.

Beckenbauer replied: "yes." But he added, "wait for this evening. You'll know all that there is."

He referred to Tapie's plans to comment publicly on the situation during a live television programme late Thursday.

"Everything's going better now," Beckenbauer said. "We talked about all the details and it's going a lot better."

In Marseille, the team's director general, Jean-Pierre Bernes, criticised Beckenbauer for going public with his complaints about Tapie without any warning.

"It's too early to talk about divorce," said Bernes. "But without wishing to cast doubts on the man, there surely is a problem of culture and communication with Franz Beckenbauer."

Bernes described Beckenbauer's tenure with Marseille as a failure, saying the German had not been able to feel comfortable with his players.

"(Tapie) must intervene, or the club will explode," Bernes said.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SATURDAY DECEMBER 22, 1990

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: Now that we have entered the Winter Solstice and the sign of Capricorn you should be busy discussing new ideas as they relate to your immediate future. Attach yourself wisely.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Don't let your family interfere with your plans to make an onslaught in the world of action so you can get more prestige, career outlets.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) You are able to handle routines better if you sit down with outside allies and decide your joint plans instead of letting fellow associates assist.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) You now find you are able to carry through with the promises you have made if you refuse to allow amendments to stand in your path of progress.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Your partners have the right idea so don't ask family for their suggestions which could be pretty poor now but rely on outsiders.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Stop running all over the place trying to get others to do what you want and what you have agreed you would with all types of associates.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Have a good time every spare moment and spend as little as possible on extravagances and instead show you value others opinion and give them a smile.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Don't try to uncover some mystery that intrigues you but instead get out and have the appointments, do the errands and shopping that you need.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) This is your time to find out what your family expects of you and to carry through with their wishes instead of working angles to get your way.

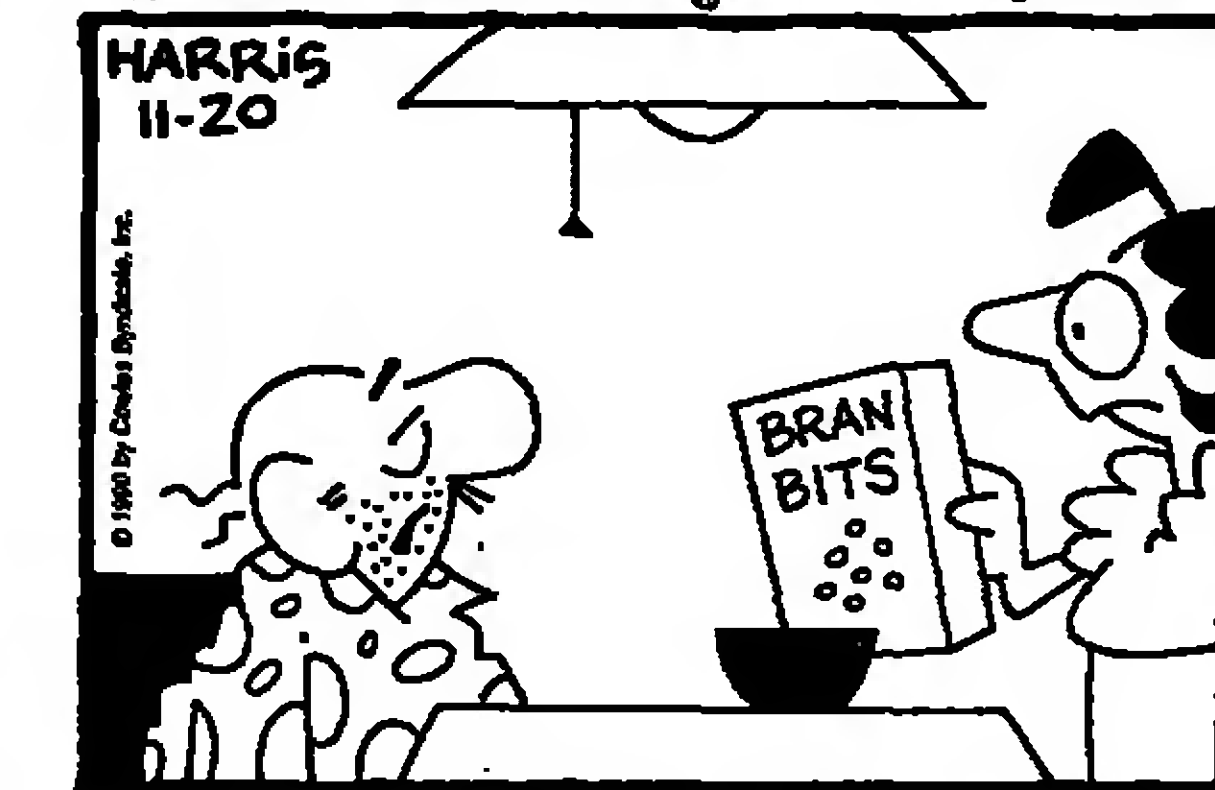
SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Get away from those friends and acquaintances that take up your time on trivia and find how you can have a greater abundance to spare.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) If you steer clear of those in power and authority and centre your activities on your personal desires you can make this quite a good day.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Now you can get off alone to find out what confidantes and experts will do to make your best dreams come true and more easily to handle.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) This is the moment for you to show you are the one who does have the intelligence to leave dull tasks alone and to get a serious minded to help.

THE BETTER HALF. By Harris



"I've had enough fiber today — I swallowed my dentures."

JUMBLE. THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

By Harris Arnold and Bob Lee

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

INGGO

RATAL

ELBARR

WEARLY

It's all the same fault. He...

WHAT 'LITTLE WHITE LIES' USUALLY ARE.

Now arrange the circled letters to form the cryptic answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

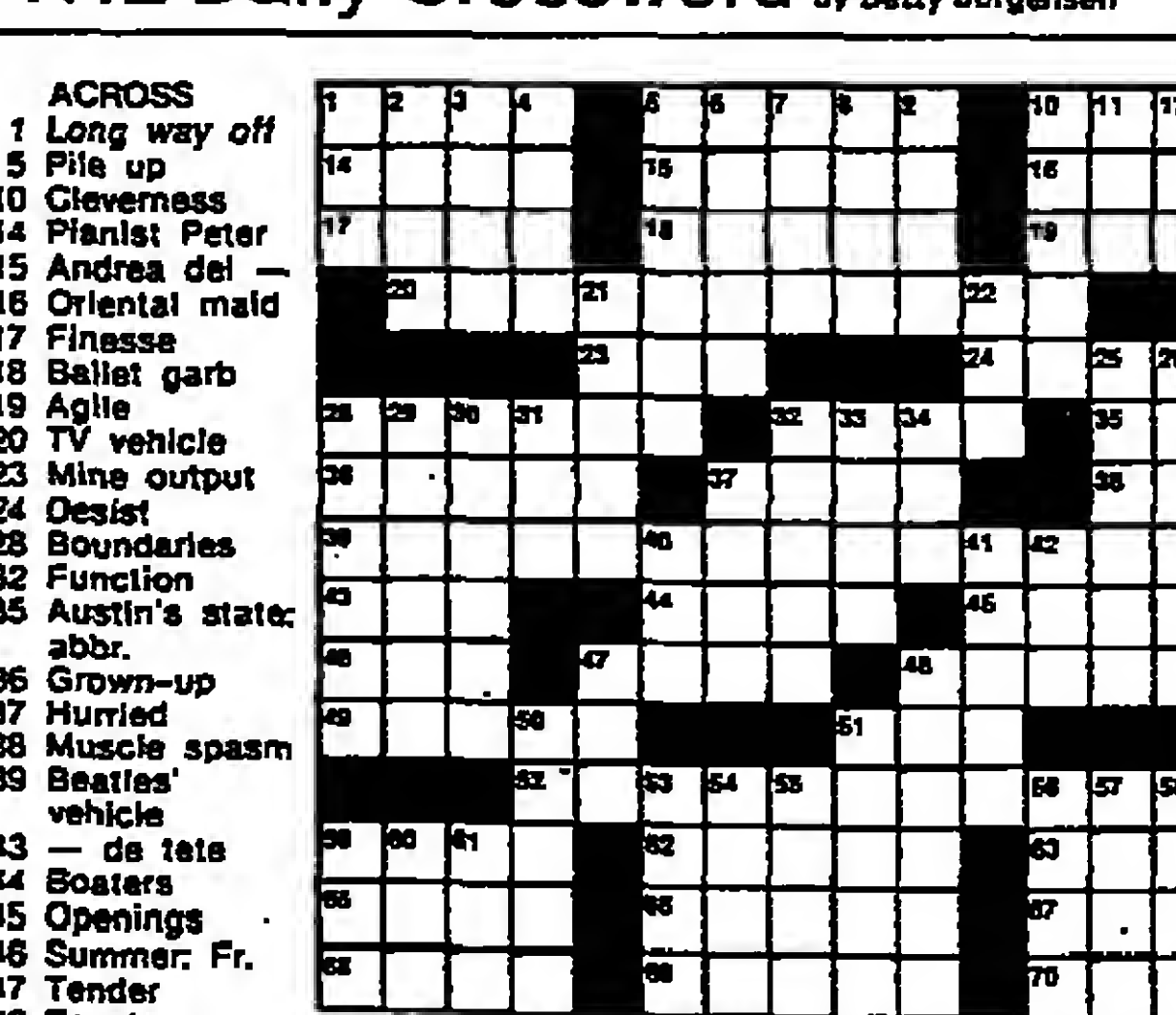
Print answer here:

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumble: ALBUM GRAVE BRUTAL RAGLAN

Answer: What the bachelor's views were — "UN-ALTAR-ABLE"

THE Daily Crossword by Betty Jorgensen



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Yesterday's Puzzle Solved:

LAST SWAMP FOST
TIGER TARDIO TORA
PRA OVERS ROMA
SURNANE RATERINE
TARDI ESE RER
AIA RUDITY DALL
CANAPE OPERAS
TIERE RERRE ETC
TIERE RAP RARES
TECHNICAL
TAPITRA RINAGRA
HAYN HARTLE SAKIC
RIPS SCOLD RARE
SLAT MEARS AGES

50 Like a peach
51 Fence
52 crossing
53 Bedouin
54 Napoleon won here
55 Turk, vip
56 Gr. warrior
57 Like a goldunc
58 Dimes
59 Box office
60 Kind of party here
61 Valdez sail
64 Negative

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF
& TANNAH HIRSCH
1990 Tribune Media Services, Inc.

EACH TRICK IN ITS TIME

Neither vulnerable. North deals.
NORTH
♦ A Q 8 4
♦ J 10 9
♦ K Q 10 9
WEST
♦ 6 3
♦ K 10 7 5
♦ K 8 4 2
♦ 6 5 3
EAST
♦ K 5
♦ J 8 4 3 2
♦ 7 6 3
♦ A J 8
SOUTH
♦ J 10 9 7 2
♦ Q 9 6
♦ A 5
♦ 7 4 2

The bidding:
North East South West
1 Pass 1 ♦ Pass
4 ♦ Pass Pass Pass
Opening lead: Six of ♦

The concept of tempo somehow is associated more with chess than with bridge. That is not really so. When you win a trick at bridge can be crucial, both on offense and defense. See what a difference it makes on this simple hand from a rubber bridge game.

In support of spades, North's hand is worth some 21 points. The jump to game describes the hand perfectly—great strength and good

four-card trump support.

West led a top-of-nothing club and East captured dummy's queen

with the ace. That reflexive play spelled *flair* for the defense. For want of something better to do, East shifted to a heart. The table's ace won and declarer came to hand with the ace of diamonds to run the jack of spades. In with the king, East persevered with a heart. Dummy ruffed, the outstanding trumps were drawn and the king of diamonds was forced out, whereupon declarer claimed the rest of the tricks, since a club could be discarded on the table's diamonds.

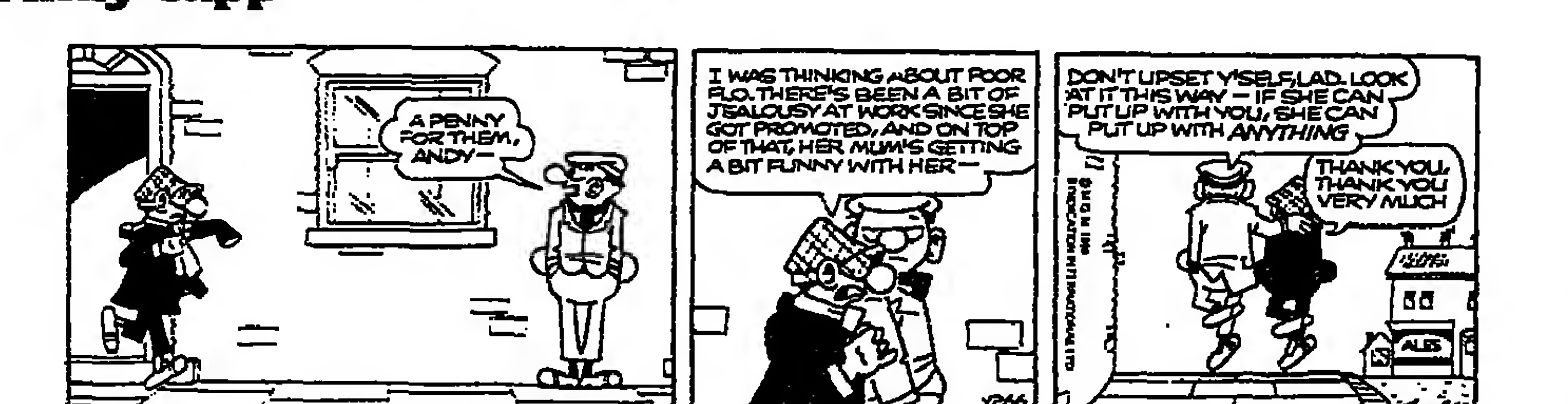
East blew the defense at the very first trick. All that was needed was to allow dummy's queen to win the first trick. No matter what declarer does, sooner or later West must gain the lead with the king of diamonds to shoot a club through dummy's K-10. Whether declarer finesse or plays the king, East must collect two club tricks for a one-trick set.

What if South had started with a singleton club? That was impossible from the opening lead. The defensive holdup play was not only safe, but vital.

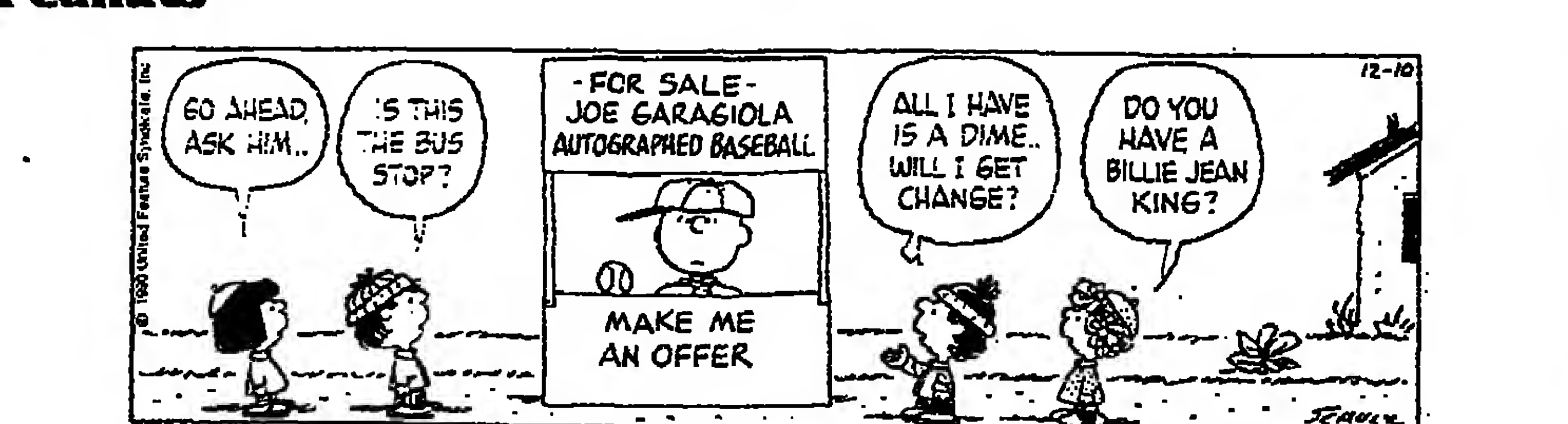
Mutt'n'Jeff



Andy Capp



Peanuts



U.S. capital spending to rise marginal 0.4 per cent in 1991

WASHINGTON (R) — Spending by U.S. businesses to expand production is expected to rise a slight 0.4 per cent in 1991 after inflation, the weakest annual rate in five years since a decline in 1986, the Commerce Department said Thursday.

That follows a revised estimate of a 4.1 per cent rise in real capital spending this year, down from a 5.1 per cent increase previously anticipated.

On a quarterly basis, real spending decreased between July and September by 1.2 per cent, the first quarterly decline in business investment since the final three months of 1988, when spending declined by 0.3 per cent, department officials said.

Business plans for plant and equipment spending are a signal of corporate managers' confidence, or lack of it, that demand for goods and services will grow enough to justify the investment.

The latest estimates are based on a survey done between October and November. It updates an earlier survey of 1990 spending plans and provides the first look at investment intentions for 1991.

The projected 0.4 per cent rise in real 1991 capital spending would be the weakest investment since 1986, when spending

actually fell 3.1 per cent.

The department previously estimated in September that 1990 real capital spending would rise by 5.1 per cent but that was revised down to 4.1 per cent in the latest survey.

The economy has been slowing steadily for the past several months and is widely believed to have begun a recession.

Citicorp announces dividend cut, layoffs

NEW YORK (AP) — Citicorp, the nation's largest banking company, has announced a drastic reorganization plan that will slash stock dividends, quadruple projected layoffs to 8,000 and set aside additional money to cover bad loans, resulting in a fourth-quarter loss of at least \$300 million.

The announcement came against a background of one of the worst years for the U.S. banking industry since the Great Depression and followed similar steps taken by other leading U.S. banks that have been hampered by declining real estate values and a slumping economy.

Citicorp said the steps would eventually result in a savings of \$800 million annually.

It was unclear when the layoffs would take place but the bank had said previously it intended to lay off 2,000 workers.

Citicorp also said it was setting aside an additional \$310 million for commercial loan loss reserves, following an examination by federal banking auditors.

The company also said it was cutting its annual dividend by 78 cents to \$1 per share.

Citicorp projected a loss for the fourth quarter would range between \$300 million and \$100 million. Nonetheless, the company said it expects to report a profit for 1990 ranging between \$100 million and \$500 million.

Kuwaitis lend Syria \$105 million

DAMASCUS (R) — Kuwait's toppled government agreed Thursday to loan 30 million Kuwaiti dinars (\$105 million) on favourable terms to Syria, one of the main Arab states in the anti-Iraqi alliance.

Syrian officials said Kuwait Finance Minister Ali Al Khalifa Al Sabah signed the accord with minister of state for planning, Sabah Baqajji, during a visit to Damascus.

They said the money would be used for a Damascus sanitation project costing 10 billion Syrian pounds (\$890 million).

The loan would be repaid over 25 years with five years grace at interest of 2.5 per cent, the officials said.

Saudis reward Turks

ISTANBUL (AP) — Saudi Arabia has granted Turkey \$1.6 billion worth of crude oil to offset the economic losses this country has suffered for the embargo against Iraq, a Saudi official said Thursday.

Saudi Kamil, head of a Saudi goodwill delegation, said said began last month.

"We know that this is not enough. That's why the United States has appealed to the Gulf countries, Germany and Japan to help those nations which have been affected most by the Gulf crisis," Kamil said.

He said "no price tag can possibly be put on the Turkish nation's sacrifice."

Turkey has cut off two pipelines pumping Iraqi crude through this country into oil tankers in the Mediterranean, banned all direct and transit trade with Iraq and complied with a U.N. air embargo against its southeastern neighbour.

According to World Bank estimates, the economic loss Turkey will suffer in one year because of the Gulf crisis will amount to \$7 billion.

OECD sees continued world growth next year despite recession in U.S.

PARIS (R) — The Gulf crisis is finally pushing the weak U.S. economy into recession, but Germany and Japan will propel the industrial world as a whole to a ninth consecutive year of growth in 1991, the OECD said Thursday.

In its half-yearly economic outlook, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) published a forecast of two per cent growth in output by its 24 member countries in 1991, down from 2.8 per cent this year.

But David Henderson, chief economist of the Paris-based think tank, admitted the estimate was already out of date because figures from Washington in the month since the outlook was compiled had been gloomier than expected.

"It's more than quite likely that there will be a recession (in the United States) in the sense of two successive quarters of negative growth," Henderson told a news conference.

He said the U.S. economy was now expected to show no growth in the second half of 1990 and would probably contract in the first half of 1991. In its report, the OECD had forecast a 0.6 per cent rate growth for both periods.

Because of the rapid deterioration, Henderson said Tuesday's half-percentage point cut in the U.S. discount rate had been expected, even though the prepared OECD report had recommended higher U.S. interest rates in 1991 to combat inflation.

"Had we known then what we know now, I don't think we would have used that phrase," he said.

But Henderson said the downturn in the United States did not change the bigger picture for the industrial world. The expected 1990 growth rate for the OECD of 2.8 per cent would have to be pared back by no more than 0.1 per cent, he said.

The agency's previous economic outlook, released in June before the Gulf crisis erupted, had forecast 2.9 per cent OECD growth both this year and next.

Stephen Potter, head of the OECD's country studies division, said booming domestic demand in Japan and the impetus of unification to Germany's economy would underpin global growth.

The OECD nevertheless expects Japanese growth to slow to 3.7 per cent in 1991 from 6.1 per cent this year and sees growth in Germany easing to three per cent from 4.2 per cent.

"Although it is popularly supposed that when the U.S. sneezes, the rest of the world catches pneumonia, it's certainly not at all inevitable," Potter said.

Indeed, the industrial world will not only manage to skirt recession, it will start to snap out of the current slowdown by mid-1991 if proper policies are followed, the OECD said.

Central banks must not repeat the mistake of the 1970s, when they tried to cushion the impact of two oil shocks by cutting interest rates. That only made inflation worse. Instead, higher oil prices should be passed along to consumers, the OECD said.

It gave policy-makers high marks for following this advice so far and said the Gulf crisis and strains in financial markets have not yet sapped confidence to the point that businesses slash investment and consumers stop spending.

"Confidence has nonetheless become more fragile. Policy-makers must play an important role in nurturing it, by responding in a way that prevents the initial boost to prices becoming embedded in a wage-price spiral," the report said.

If governments stay the course, the difficulties stemming from higher oil prices should prove to be only temporary and growth in the OECD area should pick up to 2.5 per cent in 1992.

And inflation, projected to pick up to 4.9 per cent in 1991 from 4.3 per cent this year, would fall back to 4.3 per cent in 1992. In June the OECD predicted 4.4 per cent inflation in 1990 and 1991.

But the report said the new projections might prove to be rosy — not only because war in the Gulf would send oil prices soaring beyond the assumed price of \$27 a barrel.

It set out a long list of "disturbing" trends — plunging equity prices, rising interest rates in some countries, a credit crunch in the United States and banking problems in Japan.

"The economic climate could therefore turn out to be more sombre than projected. This, against a background of continuing financial-market fragility in some major countries, would certainly weigh heavily on private-sector confidence — which in turn would feed back to worsen economic developments," it said.

The OECD also said there was an inflationary risk in permitting a further drop in the dollar, which is already languishing near record lows against the Deutschmark.

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It gave policy-makers high marks for following this advice so far and said the Gulf crisis and strains in financial markets have not yet sapped confidence to the point that businesses slash investment and consumers stop spending.

"Confidence has nonetheless become more fragile. Policy-makers must play an important role in nurturing it, by responding in a way that prevents the initial boost to prices becoming embedded in a wage-price spiral," the report said.

If governments stay the course, the difficulties stemming from higher oil prices should prove to be only temporary and growth in the OECD area should pick up to 2.5 per cent in 1992.

And inflation, projected to pick up to 4.9 per cent in 1991 from 4.3 per cent this year, would fall back to 4.3 per cent in 1992. In June the OECD predicted 4.4 per cent inflation in 1990 and 1991.

But the report said the new projections might prove to be rosy — not only because war in the Gulf would send oil prices soaring beyond the assumed price of \$27 a barrel.

It set out a long list of "disturbing" trends — plunging equity prices, rising interest rates in some countries, a credit crunch in the United States and banking problems in Japan.

"The economic climate could therefore turn out to be more sombre than projected. This, against a background of continuing financial-market fragility in some major countries, would certainly weigh heavily on private-sector confidence — which in turn would feed back to worsen economic developments," it said.

The OECD also said there was an inflationary risk in permitting a further drop in the dollar, which is already languishing near record lows against the Deutschmark.

But Henderson said the downturn in the United States did not change the bigger picture for the industrial world. The expected 1990 growth rate for the OECD of 2.8 per cent would have to be pared back by no more than 0.1 per cent, he said.

The agency's previous economic outlook, released in June before the Gulf crisis erupted, had forecast 2.9 per cent OECD growth both this year and next.

Stephen Potter, head of the OECD's country studies division, said booming domestic demand in Japan and the impetus of unification to Germany's economy would underpin global growth.

The OECD nevertheless expects Japanese growth to slow to 3.7 per cent in 1991 from 6.1 per cent this year and sees growth in Germany easing to three per cent from 4.2 per cent.

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World leaders praise Shevardnadze, lament his resignation

BONN (Agencies) — China's official reaction was terse and neutral, but other countries near the Soviet Union openly showed deep concern about the resignation of Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze.

The announced resignation of Shevardnadze, one of the men who helped Soviet President Mikhail S. Gorbachev end the cold war, provoked apprehensions about the future of the Soviet Union and its leader. Gorbachev said Shevardnadze agreed to stay on until a successor is chosen.

China's Foreign Ministry said only that Shevardnadze's dramatic announcement Thursday was "an internal affair of the Soviet Union. We will continue to develop friendly neighbour relations with the Soviet Union."

But Germany, fearing that failure of the Soviet president's reforms could endanger East European stability, was especially nervous.

"We can only hope that the reforms are carried out. They are good for the Soviet Union and they are good for the relationship between our people and for developments in Europe," said German Chancellor Helmut Kohl.

Germans credit the Soviets, in particular Gorbachev and his foreign minister, with clearing the way for Eastern Europe's

sweeping reforms and German unification.

Hans-Dietrich Genscher, the German Foreign Minister, said he is confident of final Soviet approval of the treaty guaranteeing German sovereignty, despite the resignation of one of Moscow's leading reformers.

Genscher and Roland Dumas, the French Foreign Minister, urgently appealed for an international effort to bolster Gorbachev's reform programme with financial aid.

Dumas said he hoped Shevardnadze's "cry of alarm" would be heard.

"It will serve as a warning to Western countries and others who are dragging their feet over aid which must be given," he said. Dumas said Shevardnadze had privately shared with him his concerns about the future of the Soviet Union but noted "this is the first time that he says it publicly."

The foreign ministers of the 12-nation European Community, which recently pledged \$2.8 billion in aid to Soviets, viewed Shevardnadze's resignation "with regret."

A statement said the EC nations "express their firmest hope that the resignation... will not entail changes in Soviet policy which might call into question the significant results thus far achieved in international rela-

tions... in the direction of disarmament and peace."

In Poland, which has a 700-mile (1,100-kilometre) border with the Soviet Union, Foreign Minister Krzysztof Skubiszewski said the internal situation there can "in many respects... cause anxiety."

"The decision of Eduard Shevardnadze can be treated as a warning. Internal policy, especially that of a superpower, finds reflection in foreign policy," he said.

The prime minister of Lithuania, Kazimiera Prunskiene, told a news conference in Tokyo Friday that her independence-minded republic is alarmed by Shevardnadze's resignation.

She said it may mean that progress achieved by the perestroika forces is being turned back by conservative forces, including sections of the Communist Party and the military.

"His resignation may lead to a situation that is unfavourable for Lithuanian independence," she said.

There was a worldwide outpouring of praise for Shevardnadze, a welcome guest in many capitals.

U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar told reporters: "On a personal basis, I regret this. He is a personal

friend and he was very supportive of the United Nations."

Vatican Radio hailed Shevardnadze as the "great architect of the Soviet diplomacy that contributed to ending the cold war."

Japanese Foreign Minister Taro Nakayama said he was "really surprised by the sudden announcement. I would like to watch the situation calmly."

Australian Foreign Minister Gareth Evans said Friday that Shevardnadze's resignation raises matters of "immediate worry" for Gorbachev's leadership.

"The optimistic view is that it could act as a warning shot to galvanise the reformers, there does seem to be at least an attempt by Mr. Shevardnadze to do just that by the style and the forcefulness of his resignation speech," Evans said.

U.S. Secretary of State James A. Baker III called the outgoing minister his friend, but said Gorbachev had assured him that Soviet foreign policy would continue on course.

U.S. Gen. John R. Galvin, NATO's military commander in Europe, said bluntly: "The Soviets certainly face a bleak winter. I hope what we're hearing now doesn't make it any worse."

White House spokesman Martin Fitzwater said President

George Bush still intended to go to Moscow in February for a meeting with Gorbachev.

"We don't expect it to affect the summit," Fitzwater said. "We expect to continue the arms control discussions."

Kohl, grim-faced, said: "I regret this very much... we cannot really judge from here whether this is grounds for alarm."

British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd said London hoped the policies of reform that Shevardnadze supported would be continued.

"I have worked with him now for a year on a whole range of very difficult matters and I have always found him friendly, helpful and constructive," Hurd said. "It is a sadness he has decided to resign."

Fitzwater, asked about Soviet support for the United States in the Gulf, said: "We believe the commitment from the Soviet Union comes from President Gorbachev and the leadership of the country and we don't anticipate that it would be affected." Baker said Shevardnadze's warning that the Soviet Union was sliding towards dictatorship had to be taken seriously.

"We would obviously be foolish not to take the warning in Minister Shevardnadze's resignation statement seriously," he told a news conference. Praising Shevardnadze as "a

man of his word," Baker said he had received no hint in recent meetings that he contemplated resignation.

"I am proud to call this man a friend. I think we achieved some significant things in the 21 months we worked together and on a personal note, I am going to miss him," Baker said.

There was no immediate reaction from British Prime Minister John Major.

Former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, who met Shevardnadze several times, called him "a statesman of world renown."

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir told Israeli Radio: "We are worried in a certain way, because our relations with Shevardnadze every time we had a chance to meet with him were excellent. But I don't think there's any reason for special worry."

Italian Foreign Minister Gianni De Michelis said: "I am shocked because it's such a sudden and dramatic decision, also because of the reasons behind it, which underscore the gravity and danger of the political conflict going on in Moscow."

Canadian External Affairs Minister Joe Clark said he hoped a way could be found to bring Shevardnadze back into the Soviet government. "Perhaps in a way... as a

consequence of the shock of this development, (it) may generate more support for that kind of a reform movement in the Soviet Union," Clark said.

Simon Lunna, deputy secretary-general of the North Atlantic Assembly, which groups NATO parliamentarians, said: "We're seeing a decline... that could set us all back many years. This has potentially all sorts of nasty implications for future relations."

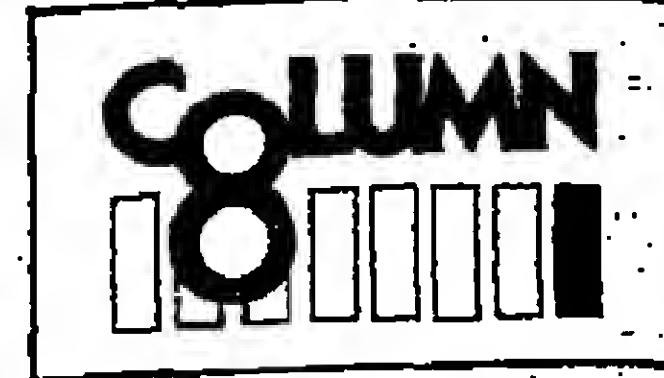
European Community President Jacques Delors said he was dismayed and "a little more worried than before," adding: "I have seen that for some days Mr. Gorbachev has been forced to make concessions to a certain element."

Belgian Foreign Minister Mark Eyskens said he hoped Gorbachev would "steer a steady course" and "pursue his reform programme."

He told the Belgian News Agency, Belga, that the resignation "was not entirely unexpected... but the circumstances are astonishing."

Soviet experts in the United States said Shevardnadze's resignation was a shock that underscored domestic turmoil in the Soviet Union.

They praised Shevardnadze's cordial relationship with the Reagan and Bush administrations,



Fishy money traps robbers

CAIRO (R) — Bank notes smelling of fish gave away five Egyptians who robbed a bank van of 1.7 million pounds (\$600,000) last month. They were arrested after a tip-off from a jeweller in Alexandria where they left the smelly notes as a down payment on gold items, security sources said. The jeweller recalled that a fish merchant had told police after the robbery that some of the money he had deposited smelled of his wares.

Thatcher gets Order of Merit

LONDON (AP) — Queen Elizabeth II invested former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher with the Order of Merit. The investiture took place in private in the queen's audience room at Buckingham Palace, a spokesman said. The Order of Merit, founded in 1902, outranks all other royal honours and is a personal gift of the queen. The award was in recognition of Mrs. Thatcher's service as prime minister for 11½ years. Mrs. Thatcher, 65, resigned Nov. 22 after failing to win the first round of the Conservative Party leadership contest outright. Only the monarch and 24 others can be members of the Order of Merit, founded by King Edward VII. A vacancy was created by the death last year of Lord Olivier, the actor Laurence Olivier.

Thatcher honours aides

LONDON (R) — Former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher has rewarded an inner circle of advisers with farewell honours for their devotion during her 11½ years in office. Traditionally, an outgoing British Prime Minister is given a final chance to ask Queen Elizabeth to bestow titles that allow the holder to be called "Sir," "Lord" or "Lady." The result was an honour list of Thatcher servants — political and domestic. A top reward went to her powerful press secretary, Bernard Ingham, who was made a knight. So was private secretary Charles Powell, who helped with foreign policy. Brian Griffiths, head of Thatcher's policy unit, was made a baron. Ingham, 58, whose mood veered between affability and irascibility, had presided over cosy twice-daily "lobby" sessions with senior journalists to impart details of the prime minister's movements, decisions and attitudes.

Ex-owner reopens Mustang Ranch

RENO, Nevada (R) — Only a month after federal tax collectors auctioned off his Nevada brothel known as the Mustang Ranch, former owner Joe Conforte threw open its doors again — this time as manager. The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) had seized the bawdy house from Conforte and last month sold it at auction for \$1.49 million. The move came after a long legal fight in which Conforte refused to pay \$13 million in back taxes. The buyer was Mustang Properties, represented by Reno lawyer Victor Perry. His brother, Peter Perry, is Conforte's attorney and has said Conforte does not have any ownership interest in the brothel. Conforte appeared before the Storey County commission to reclaim the brothel's operating licence, which apparently was not revoked by the local authorities. "Mr. Conforte came before us, as he said, as a courtesy to let us know he had a valid operating licence and he should be able to reopen," said County Commissioner Shirley Colletti, herself a former manager of the Mustang. "It is my personal opinion that he is definitely correct as far as the law is concerned," she added. The licence cannot be cancelled without due legal process, including a public hearing, she said.

Siberian cranes enjoy Iran's warm weather

TEHRAN (R) — Migrating cranes from Siberia are extending their stay in Iran, where the autumn has been the warmest in three decades. Some 5,000 cranes in marshes near the central city of Arak "show no sign of wanting to leave" weeks after the dates they usually set out for warmer climes further south, Tehran's Abrar daily said.

Baltic states fear Shevardnadze resignation could mean crackdown

MOSCOW (R) — Rebel Baltic republics fear that the resignation of Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze could herald a crackdown on them by the Kremlin.

Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia — all headed by elected pro-independence governments — are already reeling from scattered violence, a show of force by the Soviet military and tough talk from President Mikhail Gorbachev.

But the dramatic loss of Shevardnadze, one of the central pillars of Gorbachev's perestroika policy, has removed one of the few liberals in the top leadership.

It has highlighted the growing influence of the hardliners, who are demanding a crackdown on the accelerating separatism in the Baltics, the Caucasian republic of Georgia and other regions.

"Promises by the militarists to 'insist order'... are especially directed at the independence of the Baltic states," Lithuanian President Vytautas Landsbergis said in a statement on Shevardnadze's departure.

The Soviet foreign minister himself warned of impending dictatorship in his resignation speech in parliament Thursday.

In the Baltic region scattered bomb blasts — blamed by locals on military provocateurs — the build-up of Soviet army forces and increasingly vocal opposition by pro-independence activists have left the region in turmoil.

Many local leaders expect some Kremlin action to stem the "disorders," virtually the same pretext used in 1939 and 1940 to

bring in large contingents of the Soviet army to boost existing garrisons.

The powerful popular fronts, which spearheaded the independence movement, have begun planning for the suspension of their elected governments and the imposition of presidential rule, something Gorbachev said Wednesday may be necessary in "troubled spots."

An action programme drawn up by the Latvian Popular Front spells out steps to protect the republic's fledgling bid for statehood both before and after what it calls "X-hour."

Plans include "decentralising" communications equipment and computers to protect them from any move by the Soviet military to seize the republic's parliament, 24-hour radio broadcasts, civil disobedience and work stoppages.

The Estonian parliament has appealed to citizens to organise protest campaigns in the case of Soviet "re-occupation."

"The possibility exists of the Soviet Union applying pressure to reverse democratic developments in the republic," said the appeal issued Tuesday.

And the city council in the Lithuanian capital Vilnius approved a call to bring the city to a standstill should Moscow move against the republic.

In the big Lithuanian port of Klaipeda, the local garrison commander has been authorised by Moscow to step up military patrols and to check documents of "suspicious" civilians, the city's mayor said by telephone.

The special order, invoking instructions from Gorbachev and Defence Minister Dmitri

Yazov, also allows arrest of anyone "offending servicemen in any manner."

Klaipeda Mayor Vytautas Cepas said there had been no arrests under the special order and dismissed the order's reference to "increased beatings of servicemen" as groundless.

"This is an obvious provocation aimed to destabilise the situation in the city of Klaipeda. And I think they plan to spread this all over the republic," he said.

The Lithuanian parliament has sent a note to Gorbachev protesting the deployment of Soviet army patrols in Klaipeda.

According to the TASS news agency, the commander of the Klaipeda garrison notified Lithuanian authorities Wednesday that armed units would begin patrolling the streets and have the authority to check people's documents.

The presidium of the republic's Supreme Council, or parliament, Thursday demanded that military orders authorising the patrols be immediately rescinded and that the officers who issued the orders be punished.

"This order is a flagrant violation of the laws and the rights of citizens of the republic of Lithuania, as well as a political provocation with the intent to heighten tensions and to create potential conflicts," a copy of the note telexed to Western news agencies said.

The note called on Gorbachev to "revoke the mentioned directives of the Soviet army authorities and to punish them for their willful behavior which is accompanied by the threat of armed violence..."

war. But we can keep them under control."

However, officials from Asia and Westerners close to the negotiations are pessimistic that Hun Sen will swallow the accord at this juncture.

Since July the once-peaceful Sra Mor village in Cambodia has been sucked into the smouldering war, its stilt houses smashed by rockets, its people forced temporarily to abandon their homes.

After the attack government troops ordered some 4,000 families to protected areas, giving them a little rice and salt. They returned when soldiers withdrew earlier this month.

"They accused us of helping the guerrillas and said that if we didn't go quickly we would be shelled," farmer Prum Min said.

Villagers said the army forced them out of their homes last July and made them move to government-controlled Route 12, about 25 kilometres to the east.

For much of the decade-long conflict villages along the Stung River have, like much of central Cambodia, stayed free of the fighting which was concentrated on the country's fringes.

Since Vietnam's withdrawal from Cambodia in late 1989, guerrilla factions, pinned down for a decade on the Thai border by much larger Vietnamese forces, have made considerable inroads.

Eight people were killed when government troops accidentally fired a salvo of rockets into this village in central Kompong

Quake kills 1 in Greece

ATHENS (R) — Thousands of people fled their homes in northern Greece Friday in the strongest earthquake to strike the area in 12 years, police said.

The quake, measuring 5.5 on the open-ended Richter Scale, was felt throughout northern Greece and southern Yugoslavia and Bulgaria. It caused panic among the one million population of Salonika, Greece's second largest city.

"A 70-year-old woman was killed when her house collapsed. We have no further reports of casualties but a number of old buildings collapsed, others were seriously damaged and the people are in the streets," said a senior police officer at Edessa, near the Yugoslavian border.

"Police and army units have been mobilised and parents have been advised to pick up their children from schools," he said.

Police in Salonika said panic was widespread, with people fleeing their homes, but no casualties were reported.

"Some people were still asleep when the quake struck. It felt like an explosion and had a long duration. There were panic shouts from everywhere and people fled their homes and offices," a Salonika official said.

The Athens Seismological Institute logged the tremor at 8 a.m. (0700 GMT) with its epicentre 350 kilometres north of Athens. Power and telephones were cut in many villages in the area.

It was the second earthquake to hit southern Europe within a week.

Thom province.

"There was no time, there was nothing they could do," said an officer of the Khmer People's National Liberation Front, one of the guerrilla groups expanding its influence in the area.

"Civilians don't know what to do (when there is shelling). Soldiers know to get down and take cover," said the officer.

Small groups of civilians, fleeing shelling from both sides, have taken shelter in deep forest throughout Siem Reap province.

"This war is really tough on us. We want it to end quickly," said farmer Mong Khon. "Our trust has run out. We don't believe any of the leaders any more."

Prum Min, 79, from Veal Thal village described how troops arrived one evening and told the people to prepare their things because they had to leave at six o'clock the next morning.

Prum Min said eight villages with about 4,000 families were moved to an unprepared section of Route 12 and given only basic supplies.

Villagers said malaria and hunger had taken their toll. Many became sick, some had died.

When Phnom Penh soldiers withdrew from positions near the new settlement in early December the villagers returned home.

"Of course we're happy to be back but there's not enough rice because we couldn't tend our fields. We lost one harvest," said Prum Min.

41 Tamil rebels killed in Sri Lankan offensive

COLOMBO (AP) — Government troops raided seven villages in eastern Sri Lanka, killing 32 Tamil Tiger rebels as they tried to flee, military officials said Friday.

The government also imposed a curfew on four districts in the north and east as part of the military operation to capture rebels operating in villages.

The latest offensive was conducted Thursday in the eastern Batticaloa district. The troops were aided by low-flying airplanes, said the officials, who cannot be identified by name under briefing rules.

They said nine other Tamil Tiger militants were killed and 22 captured Thursday in two separate operations in the north and east.

"We are going all out to get them in the east. There will be no let up," said one official. He said 1,015 suspected rebels have been arrested.

The claims could not be independently confirmed. There was no word from the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), which has been fighting since 1983 to set up an independent nation in the north and the east for Sri Lanka's ethnic Tamil minority.

Military officials said a curfew in Batticaloa was imposed just before government troops entered seven nearby villages to search for rebels. The area is 230 kilometres east of Colombo, the capital.

Deputy Defence Minister Ranjan Wijeratne said Friday a curfew was also imposed in the eastern district of Ampara and the northern districts of Vavuniya and Mullaitivu.

"We are cleaning out the remnants," Wijeratne told reporters, refusing to reveal details of the operation, code named Flush Out.

The 32 rebels killed were shot trying to flee in boats across the lagoon, the officials said.

In Akkaraipattu, another eastern area, police commandos fought pitched battle with the Tigers, killing five of them, the officials said.

In the northern Jaffna peninsula, 300 kilometres north of Colombo, army snipers fatally shot four rebels near the Palali Military Airfield, the officials said.

The Batticaloa curfew was to be lifted Friday but has been extended until Saturday, a government announcement said.

Military officials refused to say how many troops were involved in the operations, adding there were "enough to do the job."

Burma rulers ban party

BANGKOK (R) — Burma's military rulers have banned a political party whose chairman fled to the border to head a provisional government, official Rangoon Radio said.

The radio, monitored in Bangkok Thursday, said Sein Win, chairman of the Party for National Democracy, had formed a parallel government in collaboration with the insurgents, thereby contravening Burmese law.

"Therefore the registration of the Party for National Democracy as a political party with this (election) commission has been revoked."

The small Party for National Democracy was set up as a parallel to the National League for Democracy in 1989 in case the

army outlawed the main party.

The League's secretary general, Aung San Sun Kyi, who has been under house arrest since July 1989, is a patron.

Sein Win and seven other politicians elected in May set up a provisional government Tuesday at a guerrilla base at Manerplaw on the border with Thailand.

The so-called National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma links the parliamentarians with 21 dissident and ethnic groups who have waged an armed struggle against the military government since 1988 under the banner of the Democratic Alliance of Burma.

The military took power in September 1988 after crushing a nationwide pro-democracy uprising.

Soviets willing to dissolve U.N. trusteeship in Pacific

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — The Soviet Union is willing to dissolve the U.N. trusteeship over the Northern Marianas, Marshall Islands and Micronesia, ending Moscow's insistence on U.N. supervision of the islands, diplomats said Thursday.

For decades, Moscow had claimed that the United States bullied the Pacific trust territories into doing its bidding by giving them special economic favours in exchange for maintaining the rights to military bases and ranges.

Security Council diplomats, including American and Non-Aligned Movement officials, say the Soviets are willing to dissolve the 13-year-old Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, except for Palau, which has yet to approve a new political status and remains under U.S. administration.

The Federated States of Micronesia and the Marshall Islands have pushed for the termination so that their governments could gain worldwide diplomatic recognition, especially from Britain and Europe.

The Trusteeship Council members — the United States, Britain, France, China and the Soviet Union — also are permanent members of the Security Council, with veto power.

The diplomats and ambassadors, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the Soviets would vote in favour of the dissolution when it comes before the Security Council.

Vanuatu, which presides over the South Pacific Forum countries, circulated a letter Thursday from the forum to the Security Council, and Trusteeship Council calling for the partial dissolution of the trust arrangement.